THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

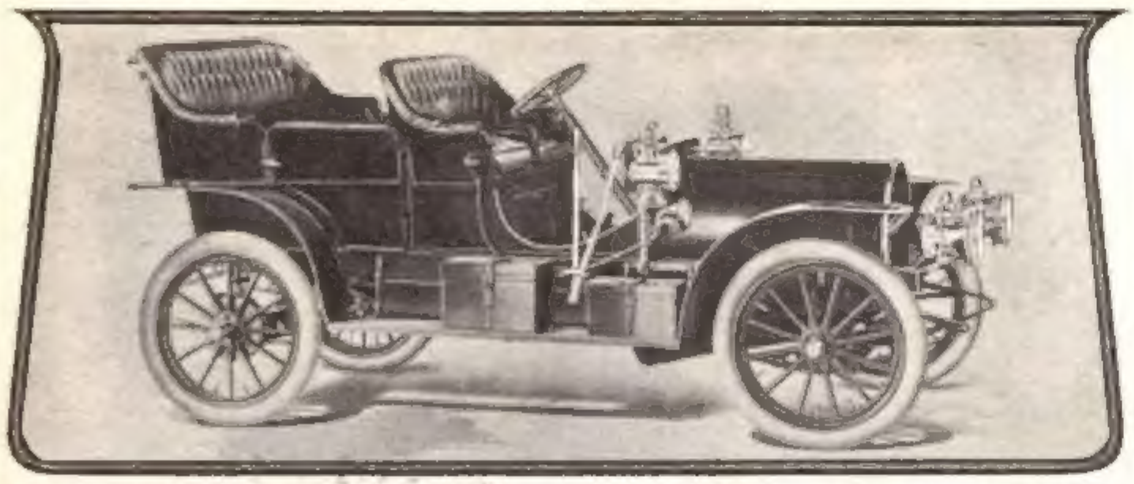
ted Weekly Magazine
D. 1728 *by* Benj. Franklin

APRIL 28, '06 FIVE CENTS

NOLENS VOLENS

By Robert W. Chambers

DRAWN BY ALBERT STERNER



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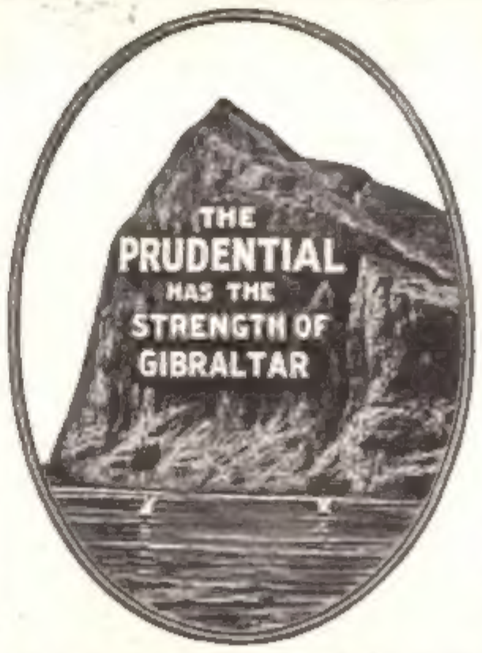

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PLAYER FOLK

Diamond Cut Diamond

CHARLES DILLINGHAM is one of the few managers who have the reputation of being men of the world and also wits. After a week during which, in consequence of holidays and special performances, there had been three matinées of Man and Superman, Clara Bloodgood met him at a fashionable luncheon at Sherry's. Now, nine performances a week are a sore trial to actors, and not less so because they do not get extra pay in proportion to the extra work. Mrs. Bloodgood's first remark was:

"You look much as usual. Where are the diamonds you have been making out of the extra matinées?"

Mr. Dillingham, as it happened, was in the middle of a story, which he had interrupted on Mrs. Bloodgood's entrance. He continued to tell it without answering her; but quietly, and so that only she noticed, he pulled up the sleeve next to her.

His cuff buttons were studded with diamonds.

Mrs. Wharton s Dramatization

THE popularity of The House of Mirth has led to a request for its dramatization, and Mrs. Wharton is now engaged on it in collaboration with Clyde Fitch. There are two ways, she says, to make a play out of a novel. One is to regard it as mere raw material, and use only what is available for strictly dramatic purposes. The other is to adhere closely to the scenes and the story of the original, aiming to present it as nearly as possible as it would have appeared in real life.

Now the essence of the drama, as has been acutely pointed out, is a struggle of wills; and with the single exception of Hamlet the central figure of strong and moving plays has always been a positive character. Lily Bart is quite as self-distrustful as the Prince of Denmark, and lacks even the vein of philosophic and tragic self-consciousness which gives him so large a part of his interest. For the purposes of a popular play, moreover, it would be necessary to give Lily's story a happy ending, and this Mrs. Wharton resolutely refuses to do. So the play is to be not so much a drama as a dramatization. Whether the mere playgoer will be disappointed remains to be seen. Mrs. Wharton, who met Mr. Fitch for the first time in connection with the play, is warm in her enthusiasm over what he has done. He is quite as anxious as herself, she says, to treat the whole thing in the spirit of truth and simplicity, and shows the keenest intuition with regard to the story and characters.

That the play will excite much popular curiosity there can be no doubt. Few American books have ever aroused so much discussion. Among the many letters Mrs. Wharton has received there are several from women asking whether Bertha Dorset, who will be remembered as a human cat, was not drawn from life, and saying that if so one of the writer's friends must have been the original. No doubt there are thousands of women who would rejoice in the knowledge that Mrs. Dorset was their own particular aversion. But the fact is that, in spite of their general truth to life, all of the characters in the book are fictional.

Shaking the Skirt

ALMOST all of David Belasco's plays have been written in collaboration, and it is an open secret that his part in them has been less literary than theatric. It may be doubted whether any playwright ever had a surer instinct for what is popular in a story, effective in a situation and strikingly beautiful in the way of the atmosphere of scenery and *mise en scène*. His plays are built before they are written; and when he has arranged everything else he has often been known to snap his fingers and say to his collaborator, "Now give me the line!"

Yet his instinct for a telling idea or sentiment is as strong as his vocabulary is backward. Once in rehearsing a scene which took place in a forest, he suddenly decided to transfer it to an environment of civilization.

"You can't smell a woman in the woods," he explained.

The original of this line is probably Houssaye's "The perfume of a woman is lost in the forest."

On another occasion he decided that the love interest was falling too much into the background. "We've got to shake the skirt," he exclaimed, "shake the skirt all through!" Here it is equally probable that the original is that exquisitely pathetic line of Cyrano's in which, after lamenting that he has never known mother or sister, or womanly sympathy in any form, he says to Roxane: "Thanks to you, one gown has trailed along my life"—"*Grâce à vous, une robe a passé dans ma vie.*"

R. H. Davis, Playwright

RICHARD HARDING DAVIS' farce of the Græco-Turkish War, The Galloper, turns upon the predicament of a famous war correspondent who is pursued through the Hellenic peninsula by a blond lady in quest of alimony; and several critics have remarked that it is made up of the familiar materials of the stage. It is none the less true, however—the incident had its original in real life. While himself on the way to the front, Mr. Davis fell in with a newspaper man who was in a not dissimilar plight. It goes without saying, it is to be added, that the character and the incidents are not at all a portrait or a transcript.

The rehearsals of the play developed another instance in which the real thing reinforced the fiction. In the climax of the second act the hero (Raymond Hitchcock), who is impersonating the fugitive, is acclaimed by a party of patriotic Greeks whom the "galloper" had rendered a much-needed service in the previous war. He delivers a speech, the gist of which is: "Hurrah for Marathon! Hurrah for George Washington! Hurrah for the Republican Party!" George Marion, who was stage manager, tried in vain to make the supers in Albanian kilts and jackets act with anything like the ecstasy of Greek patriotism. Finally he noticed that a few of them—a little band of banana venders from the Greek colony in the Bowery—were striking the proper gait. The only word of the speech they understood was Marathon, and when they heard that they simply couldn't help it. So he told the other supers to watch them and copy them. The result was a very animated scene.

Mr. Davis, by the way, has been almost as successful in the rôle of playwright as in that of story-teller. Of the four plays which he has written unaided, only one, The Taming of Helen, failed of pronounced success. Ranson's Folly has had a good measure of prosperity, and The Galloper bids fair to achieve more than this. The Dictator is probably the most successful American farce in half a dozen years. Soldiers of Fortune, which Mr. Davis wrote in collaboration with Augustus Thomas, was also a substantial success. It is an interesting fact that the Frohmans, who lost a small fortune by refusing The Dictator, made a similar mistake in the case of The Galloper.

Black Critics

MR. F. HOPKINSON SMITH tells a characteristic story of a Southern friend of his, an actor, who, by the way, was in the dramatization of Colonel Carter. On one occasion the actor was appearing in his native town, and remembered an old negro and his wife, who had been body servants in his father's household, with a couple of seats in the theatre. As it happened, he was playing the part of the villain, and was largely concerned with treasons, stratagems and spoils. From time to time he caught a glimpse of the ancient couple in the gallery, and judged from their fearsome countenances and popping eyes that they were being duly impressed.

After the play he asked them to come and see him behind the scenes. They sat together for a while in solemn silence, and then the mammy resolutely nudged her husband. The old man gathered himself together with an effort, and said: "Marse Cha'les, mebbe it ain' for us po' niggers to teach ouh young masser 'portment. But we jes' got tell yo' dat, in all de time we b'long to de fambly, none o' ouh folks ain' neveh befo' mix up in sechlike dealin's, an' we hope, Marse Cha'les, dat yo' see de erroh of yo' ways befo' yo' done sho 'nuff disgrace us."

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THE SATURDAY EVENING POST is the oldest journal of any kind that is issued today from an American Press. Its history may be traced back in a continuous, unbroken line to the days when young Benjamin Franklin edited and printed the old Pennsylvania Gazette. In nearly one hundred and eighty years there has not been a week—save only while the British army held Philadelphia and patriotic printers were in exile—when the magazine was not issued.

During Christmas week, 1728, Samuel Keimer began its publication under the title of the Universal Instructor in all Arts and Sciences and Pennsylvania Gazette. In less than a year he sold it to Benjamin Franklin, who, on October 2, 1729, issued the first copy under the name of the Pennsylvania Gazette. Franklin sold his share in the magazine to David Hall, his partner, in 1765. In 1805 the grandson of David Hall became its publisher. When he died, in 1821, his partner, Samuel C. Atkinson, formed an alliance with Charles Alexander, and in the summer of that year they changed the title of the Gazette to THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

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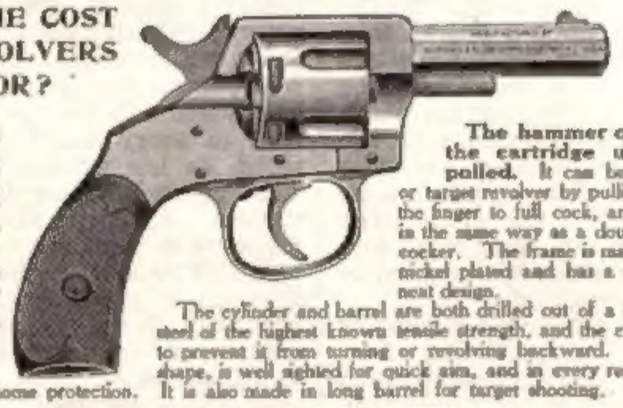

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Founded A°D° 1728 *by* Benj. Franklin

Entered at the Philadelphia Post-Office as Second-Class Matter.

Published Weekly at 425 Arch Street by THE CURTIS PUBLISHING COMPANY

London: Hastings House, 10, Norfolk Street, Strand, W.C.

Volume 178 — PHILADELPHIA, APRIL 28, 1906 — Number 44

NOLENS VOLENS

The Marble-Man of East Eighty-third Street

By ROBERT W. CHAMBERS

DURING his first year of wedded bliss, Gatewood cut the club. When Kerns wanted to see him, he had to call like other people or, like other people, accept young Mrs. Gatewood's invitations.

"Why," said Gatewood scornfully, "should I, thirty-four years of age and safely married, go to a club? Why should I, at my age, idle with a lot of idlers and listen to stuffy stories from stuffier individuals? Do you think that stale tobacco smoke, and the idiotically reiterated click of billiard-balls, and the vacant stare of the fashionably brainless, and the meaningless exchange of banalities with the intellectually aimless have any attractions for me?"

Mrs. Gatewood raised her pretty eyes in silence; Kerns returned her amused gaze rather blankly.

"Clubs!" sniffed Gatewood. "What are clubs but pretexts for wasting time? What mental, what spiritual stimulus can a man expect to find in a club? Why, Kerns, when I look back a year and think what I was, and when I look at you and think what you still are——"

"John," said Mrs. Gatewood softly.

"Oh, he knows it!" insisted her husband; "don't you, Tommy? You know the sort of life you're leading, don't you? You know what a miserable, aimless, selfish, unambitious, pitiable existence an unmarried man leads who lives at his club; don't you?"

"Certainly," said Kerns, blinking into the smiling gaze of Mrs. Gatewood.

"Then why don't you marry?"

But Kerns had risen and was making his adieux with cheerful decision; and Mrs. Gatewood was laughing as she gave him her slender hand.

"Now I know a girl——" began Gatewood; but his wife was still speaking to Kerns, so he circled around them, politely suppressing the excitement of a sudden idea struggling for utterance.

Mrs. Gatewood was saying: "I do wish John would go to his clubs occasionally. Because a man is married is no reason for his losing touch with his clubs——"

"I know a girl," broke in Gatewood excitedly, laying his arm on Kern's to detain him; but Kerns slid sideways through the door with a smile so non-committal that Mrs. Gatewood laughed again and, linking her arm in her husband's, faced partly toward him. This manœuvre, and the slightest pressure of her shoulder, obliged her husband to begin a turning movement, so that Kerns might reasonably make his escape in the middle of Gatewood's sentence; which he did with nimble and circumspect agility.

"I—I know a——" began Gatewood desperately, twisting his head over his shoulder, only to hear the deadened patter of his friend's feet over the velvet stair-carpet and the subdued clang of the front door.

"Isn't it extraordinary?" he said to his wife. "I've been trying to tell Tommy every time he comes here about a girl I know—just the very girl he ought to marry; and something prevents him from listening every time."

The attractive young matron beside him turned her face so that her eyes were directly in line with his.

"Did you ever know any people named Manners?" she asked.

"No. Why?"

"You never knew a girl named Marjorie Manners, did you, John?"

"No. What about her?"

"You never heard Mr. Kerns speak of her, did you, dear?"

"No, never. Tommy doesn't talk about girls."

Only to Hear the Deadened Patter of His Friend's Feet Over the Velvet Stair-Carpet

"You never heard him speak of a Mrs. Stanley?"

"Never. Who are these two women?"

"One and the same, dear. Marjorie Manners married an Englishman named Stanley six years ago. Do you happen to recollect that Mr. Kerns took his vacation in England six years ago?"

"Yes. What of it?"

"He crossed to Southampton with Marjorie and her mother. He didn't know she was going over to be married, and she didn't tell him. She wrote to me about it, though. I was in school at Farmington; she left school to marry—a mere child of eighteen, undeveloped for her age, thin, almost scrawny, with pipe-stem arms and neck, red hair, a very sweet, full-lipped mouth, and gray eyes that were too big for her face."

"Well," said Gatewood with a short laugh, "what about it? You don't think Kerns fell in love with an insect of that genus, do you?"

"Yes, I do," smiled Mrs. Gatewood.

"Nonsense. Besides, what of it? She's married, you say."

"Her husband died of enteric at Ladysmith. She wrote me. She has never remarried. Think of it, John—in all these years she has never remarried!"

"Oh!" said Gatewood pityingly; "do you really suppose that Tommy Kerns has been nursing a blighted affection all these years without ever giving *me* an inkling? Besides, men don't do that; men don't curl up and blight. Besides, men don't take any stock in big-eyed, flat-chested, red-headed pipe-stems. Why do you think that Kerns ever cared for her?"

"I know he did."

"How do you know it?"

"From Marjorie's letters."

"The conceited kid! Well, of all insufferable nerve! A man like Kerns—a man—one of the finest, noblest characters—spiritually, intellectually, physically—a practically faultless specimen of manhood! And a red-headed, spindle-legged —— Oh, my! Oh, fizz! Dearest, men don't worship a cage of bones with an eighteen-year-old soul in it—like a nervous canary peeking out at the world!"

"She created a furor in England," observed his wife, smiling.

"Oh, I dare say she might over there. Besides, she's doubtless fattened up since then. But if you suppose for one moment that Tommy could even remember a girl like that——"

Mrs. Gatewood smiled again—the wise, sweet smile of a young matron in whom her husband's closest friend had confided. And after a moment or two the wise smile became more thoughtful and less assured; for that very day the Tracer of Lost Persons had called on her to inquire about a Mrs. Stanley—a new client of his who had recently bought a town house in East Eighty-third Street and a country-house on Long Island; and who had applied to him to find her fugitive butler and a pint or two of family jewels. And, after her talk with the Tracer of Lost Persons, Mrs. Gatewood knew that her favorite among all her husband's friends, Mr. Kerns, would never of his own volition go near that same Marjorie Manners who had flirted with him to the very perilous verge before she told him why she was going to England—and who, now a widow, had returned with her five-year-old daughter to dwell once more in the city of her ancestors.

Kerns had said very simply: "She has spoiled women for me—all except you, Mrs. Gatewood. And if Jack hadn't married you——"

"I understand, Mr. Kerns. I'm awfully sorry."

"Don't feel sorry; only, if you can, call Jack off. He's been perfectly possessed to marry me to somebody ever since he married you. And if I told him why I don't care to consider the matter he wouldn't believe me—he'd spend his life in trying to bring me

around. Besides, I couldn't ever tell him about—Marjorie Manners. Anyhow, nothing on earth could ever induce me to look at her again. . . . You say she is now a widow?"

"Yes, Mr. Kerns, and very beautiful."

"Never again," muttered Kerns. "Never! She was homely enough when I asked her to marry me. I don't want to see her; I don't want to know what she looks like. I'm glad she has changed so I wouldn't recognize her, for that means the end of it all—the final elimination of the girl I remember on the ship. . . . It was probably a sort of diseased infatuation, wasn't it, Mrs. Gatewood? Think of it! A few days on shipboard and—and I asked her to marry me! . . . I don't blame her, after all, for letting me dangle. It was an excellent opportunity for her to study a rare species of idiot. She was justified and I am satisfied. Only, do call Jack off with a hint or two."

"I shall try," said young Mrs. Gatewood thoughtfully—very thoughtfully, for already every atom and fibre of her femininity was aroused in behalf of these two estranged young people whom Providence certainly had not meant to put asunder.

. . . . . .

"Nothing," said Gatewood firmly, "can make me believe that Kerns ought not to marry somebody; and I'm never going to let up on him until he does. I'll bet I could fix him for life if I called in the Tracer to help me. Isn't it extraordinary how Kerns has kept out of it all these years?"

The attractive girl beside him turned her face once more so that her clear, sweet eyes were directly in line with his.

"It *is* extraordinary," she said seriously. "I think you ought to drop in at the club some day and bully him."

"I don't want to go to the club," said the infatuated man.

"Why, dear?"

He looked straight at her and she flushed prettily, and a tint of color touched his own face. Which was very nice of him. So she didn't say what she was going to say—that it would be perhaps better for them both if he practiced on her an artistic absence now and then. Younger in years, she was more mature than he. She knew. But she was too much in love with him to salt their ambrosia with common-sense or suggest economy in their use of the nectar bottle.

However, the gods attend to that, and she knew they would, and she let them. So one balmy evening late in May when the new moon's ghost floated through the upper haze, and the golden Diana above Manhattan turned flame color, and the electric lights began to glimmer along Fifth Avenue, and the first faint scent of the young summer freshened the foliage in square and park, Kerns, stopping at the club for a moment, found Gatewood seated at the same window they both were wont to haunt in earlier and more flippant days.

"Are you dining here?" inquired Kerns, pushing the electric button with enthusiasm. "Well, that's the first glimmer of common-sense you've betrayed since you've been married!"

"Dining *here!*" repeated Gatewood. "I should hope not! I am just going home——"

"He's thoroughly cowed," commented Kerns; "every married man you meet at a club is just going home." But he continued to push the button, nevertheless.

Gatewood leaned back in his chair and gazed about him, nose in the air. "What a life!" he observed virtuously. "It's all I can do to stand it for ten minutes. You're here for the evening, I suppose?" he added pityingly.

"No," said Kerns, "I'm going uptown to Billy Lee's house to get my suit-case. His family are out of town, and he is at Seabright, and he let me camp there until the workmen finish papering my rooms upstairs. I'm to lock up the house and send the key to the Burglar Alarm Company to-night. Then I go to Boston on the 12:10. Want to come? There'll be a few doing."

"To Boston! What for?"

"Contracts! We can go out to Cambridge when I've finished my business. There'll be *etwas* doing."

"*Can't* you ever recover from being an undergraduate?" asked Gatewood, disgusted.

"Well—is there anything the matter with a man getting next to a little amusement in life?" asked Kerns. "Do you object to my being happy?"

"Amusement? You don't know how to amuse yourself. You don't know how to be happy. Here you sit, day after day, swallowing Martinis——" He paused to finish his own, then resumed: "Here you sit, day after day, intellectually stultified, unemotionally ignorant of the higher and better life——"

"No, I don't. I've a book upstairs that tells all about that. I read it when I have hold-overs——"

"Kerns, I wish to speak seriously. I've had it on my mind ever since I married. May I speak frankly?"

"Well, when I come back from Boston——"

"Because I know a girl," interrupted Gatewood—"Wait a moment, Tommy!"—as Kerns rose and sauntered toward the door—"you've plenty of time to catch your train and be civil, too! I mean to tell you about that girl if you'll listen."

The Tracer of Lost Persons

Kerns halted and turned upon his friend a pair of eyes unwinking in their placid intelligence.

"I was going to say that I know a girl," continued Gatewood, "who is just the sort of a girl you——"

"No, she isn't!" said Kerns, wheeling to resume his progress toward the cloakroom.

"Tom!"

Kerns halted.

"*You're* a fine specimen!" commented Gatewood scornfully; "you spent the best years of your life in persuading me to get married, and the first time I try to do the same for you you make for the tall timber!"

"I know it," admitted Kerns, unashamed; "I'm bashful. I'm a chipmunk for shyness, so I'll say good-night——"

"Come back," said Gatewood coldly.

"But my suit-case——"

"You left it at the Lees', didn't you? Well, you've time enough to go there, get it, make your train, and listen to me, too. Look here, Kerns, have you any of the elements of decency about you?"

"No," said Kerns, "not a single element." He seated himself defiantly in the club window facing Gatewood and began to button his gloves. When he had finished, he settled his new straw hat more comfortably on his head and, leaning forward, balancing his Malacca walking-stick across his knees, gazed at Gatewood with composure.

"Crank up!" he said pleasantly; "I'm going in less than three minutes." He pushed the electric knob as an afterthought, and when the gilt buttons of the club servant glimmered through the dusk: "Two more," he explained briskly. After a few moment's silence, broken by the tinkle of ice in thin glassware, Gatewood leaned forward, menacing his friend with an impressive forefinger:

"Did you or didn't you once tell me that a decent citizen ought to marry?"

"I did, dear friend."

"Did I or didn't I do it?"

"In the words of the classic, you *done* it," admitted Kerns.

"Was I or wasn't I going to the devil before I had the sense to marry?" persisted Gatewood.

"You was! You *was*, dear friend!" said Kerns with enthusiasm. "You had almost went there ere I appeared and saved you."

"Then why shouldn't you marry and let me save you?"

"But I'm not going to the bow-wows. *I'm* all right. I'm a decent citizen. I awake in the rosy dawn with a song on my lips; I softly whistle rag-time as I button my collar; I warble a few delicious vagrant notes as I part my sparse hair; I'm not murderous before breakfast; I go downtown, singing, to my daily toil; I fish for fat contracts in Georgia marble; I return uptown immersed in a holy calm and the evening paper. I offer myself a cocktail; I bow and accept; I dress for dinner with the aid of a rascally valet, but—*do* I swear at him? No, dear friend; I say, 'Henry, I have known far, far worse scoundrels than you. Thank you for filling up my bay-rum with water. Bless you for wearing my imported hosiery! I deeply regret that my new shirts do not fit you, Henry!' And my smile is a benediction upon that wayward scullion. Then, dear friend, why, why do you desire to offer me up upon the altar of unrest? What is a little wifey to me or I to any wifey?"

"Because," said Gatewood, irritated, "you offered me up. I'm happy and I want you to be—you great, hulking, self-satisfied symbol of supreme self-centred selfishness——"

"Oh, splash!" said Kerns feebly.

"Yes, you are. What do you do all day? Grub for money and study how to make life agreeable to yourself! Every minute of the day you are occupied in having a good time! You've admitted it! You wake up singing like a fool canary; you wear imported hosiery; you've made a soft, warm wallow for yourself at this club and here you bask your life away, waddling downtown to nail contracts and cut coupons, and uptown to dinners and theatres, only to return and sprawl here in luxury without one single thought for posterity. *Your* crime is race suicide!"

"I—my—*what!*"

"Certainly. Some shirk taxes, some jury duty. *You* shirk fatherhood, and all its happy and sacred obligations! You deny posterity! You strike a blow at it! You flout it! You menace the future of this Republic! Your inertia is a crime against the people! Instead of *pro bono publico* your motto is *pro bono tempo!*—for a good time! And, dog-Latin or not, it's the truth, and our great President——"

"Splash!" said Kerns, rising.

"I've a good mind," said Gatewood indignantly, "to put the Tracer of Lost Persons on your trail. He'd rope you and tie you in record time!"

Kerns' smile was a provocation.

"I'll do it, too!" added Gatewood, losing his temper, "if you dare give me the chance."

"Seriously," inquired Kerns, delighted, "*do* you think your friend, Mr. Keen, could encompass my matrimony against my better sense and the full enjoyment of my unimpaired mental faculties?"

"Didn't he—fortunately for me!—force me into matrimony when I had never seen a woman I would look at twice? Didn't you put him up to it? Very well, why can't I put him on your trail then? Why can't *he* do the same for you?"

"Try it, dear friend," retorted Kerns courteously.

"Do you mean that you are not afraid? Do you mean you give me full liberty to set him on you? And do you realize what that means? No, you don't; for you haven't a notion of what that man, Westrel Keen, can accomplish. You haven't the slightest idea of the machinery which he controls with a delicacy absolutely faultless; with a perfectly terrifying precision. Why, man, the Pinkerton system itself has become merely a detail in the immense complexity of the system of control which the Tracer of Lost Persons exercises over this entire continent. The urban police, the State constabulary of Pennsylvania, the rural systems of surveillance, the Secret Service, all municipal, provincial, State and National organizations form but a few strands in the universal web he has woven. Custom officials, revenue officers, the militia of the States, the army, the navy, the personnel of every city, State, and National legislative bodies form interdependent threads in the mesh he is master of; and like a big beneficent spider he sits in the centre of his web, able to tell by the slightest tremor of any thread exactly where to begin investigations!"

Flushed, earnest, a trifle out of breath with his own eloquence, Gatewood waved his hand to indicate a Ciceronian period, adding, as Kerns' incredulous smile broadened: "Say splash again, and I'll put you at his mercy!"

"Ker-splash! dear friend," observed Kerns pleasantly. "If a man doesn't want to marry, the army, the navy, the Senate, the white-wings, and the great White Father at Washington can't make him."

"I tell you I want to see you happy!" said Gatewood angrily.

"Then gaze upon me. I'm it!"

"You're not! You don't know what happiness is."

"Don't I? Well, I don't miss it, dear friend——"

"But if you've never had it, and therefore don't miss it, it's time somebody found some real happiness for you. Kerns, I simply can't bear to see you missing so much happiness——"

"Why grieve?"

"Yes, I will! I do grieve—in spite of your grinning skepticism and your bantering attitude. See here, Tom; I've started about a thousand times to say that I knew a girl——"

"Do you want to hear that splash again?"

Gatewood grew madder. He said: "I could easily lay your case before Mr. Keen and have you in love and married and happy whether you like it or not!"

"If I were not going to Boston, my son, I should enjoy your misguided efforts," returned Kerns blandly.

"Your going to Boston makes no difference. The Tracer of Lost Persons doesn't care where you go or what you do. If he starts in on your case, Tommy, you can't escape."

"You mean he can catch me now? Here? At my own club? Or on the public highway? Or on the classic Boston train?"

"He *could*. Yes, I firmly believe he could land you before you ever saw the Boston State House. I tell you he can work like lightning, Kerns. I know it; I am so absolutely convinced of it that I—I almost hesitate——"

"Don't feel delicate about it," laughed Kerns; "you may call him on the telephone while I go uptown and get my suit-case. Perhaps I'll come back a blushing bridegroom; who knows?"

"If you'll wait here I'll call him up now," said Gatewood grimly.

"Oh, very well. Only I left my suit-case in Billy's room, and it's full of samples of Georgia marble, and I've got to get it to the train."

"You've plenty of time. If you'll wait until I talk to Mr. Keen I'll dine with you here. Will you?"

"What? Dine in this abandoned joint with an outcast like me? Dear friend, are you dippy this lovely May evening?"

"I'll do it if you'll wait. Will you? And I'll bet you now that I'll have you in love and sprinting toward the altar before we meet again at this club. Do you dare bet?"

"The terms of the wager, kind friend?" drawled Kerns, delighted; and he fished out a notebook kept for such transactions.

"Let me see," reflected Gatewood; "you'll need a silver service when you're married. . . . Well, say, forks and spoons and things against an imported trap-gun—twelve-gauge, you know."

"Done. Go and telephone to your friend, Mr. Keen." And Kerns pushed the electric button with a jeering laugh, and asked the servant for a dinner-card.

Gatewood, in the telephone-booth, waited impatiently for Mr. Keen; and after a few moments the Tracer of Lost Persons' agreeable voice sounded in the receiver.

"It's about Mr. Kerns," began Gatewood; "I want to see him happy and the idiot won't be. Now, Mr. Keen, you know what happiness you and he brought to me! You know what sort of an idle, selfish, aimless, meaningless life you saved me from? I want you to do the same for Mr. Kerns. I want to ask you to take up his case at once. Besides, I've a bet on it. Could you attend to it at once?"

"To-night?" asked the Tracer, laughing.

"Why—ah—well, of course, that would be impossible. I suppose ——"

"My profession is to overcome the impossible, Mr. Gatewood. Where is Mr. Kerns?"

"Here, in this club, defying me and drinking cocktails. He won't get married and I want you to make him do it."

"Where is he spending the evening?" asked the Tracer, laughing again.

"Why, he's been stopping at the Danforth Lees' in Eighty-third Street until the workmen at the club here finish putting new paper on his walls. The Lees are out of town. He left his suit-case at their house and he's going up to get it and catch the 12:10 train for Boston."

"He goes from the Lenox Club to the residence of Mr. W. Danforth Lee, East Eighty-third Street, to get a suit-case," repeated the Tracer. "Is that correct?"

"Yes."

"What is in the suit-case?"

"Samples of that new marble he's quarrying in Georgia."

"Is it an old suit-case? Has it Mr. Kerns' initials on it?"

"Hold the wire; I'll find out."

And Gatewood left the telephone and walked into the great lounging-room where Kerns sat twirling his stick and smiling to himself.

"All over, dear friend?" inquired Kerns, starting to rise. "I've ordered a corking dinner."

"Wait!" returned Gatewood ominously. "What sort of a suit-case is that one you're going after?"

"What sort? Oh, just an ordinary ——"

"Is it old or new?"

"Brand-new. Why?"

"Is your name on it?"

"No; why? Would that thicken the plot, dear friend? Or is the Tracer foiled, ha! ha!"

Gatewood turned on his heel, went back to the telephone and, carefully shutting the door of the booth, took up the receiver.

"It's a new suit-case, Mr. Keen," he said; "no initials on it—just an ordinary case."

"Mr. Lee's residence is 38 East Eighty-third Street, between Madison and Fifth, I believe."

"Yes," replied Gatewood.

"And the family are out of town?"

"Yes."

"Is there a caretaker there?"

"No. Mr. Kerns camped there. When he leaves to-night he will send the key to the Burglar Alarm Company."

"Very well. Please hold the wire for a while."

For ten full minutes Gatewood sat gleefully cuddling the receiver against his ear. His faith in Mr. Keen was naturally boundless; he believed that whatever the Tracer attempted could not result in failure. He desired nothing in the world as ardently as to see Kerns safely married. His own happiness may have been the motive power which had set him in action in behalf of his friend—that and a certain indefinable desire to practice a species of heavenly revenge, of grateful retaliation upon the prime mover and collaborateur if not the sole author of his own wedded bliss. Kerns had made him happy.

"And I'm hanged if I don't pay him off and make him happy, too!" muttered Gatewood. "Does he think I'm going to sit still and see him go tearing and gyrating about town with no responsibility, no moral check to his evolutions, no wholesome home-duties to limit his acrobatics, no wife to clip his wings? It's time he had somebody to report to; time he assumed moral burdens and spiritual responsibilities. A man is just as happy when he is certain where he is going to sleep. A man can find just as much enjoyment in life when he feels it his duty to account for his movements. I don't care whether Kerns is comparatively happy or not—there's nothing either sacred or holy in that kind of happiness, and I'm not going to endure the sort of life he likes any longer!"

Immersed in moral reflections, inspired by affectionate obligations violently to inflict happiness upon Kerns, the minutes passed very agreeably until the voice of the Tracer of Lost Persons sounded again: "Mr. Gatewood?"

"Yes, I am here, Mr. Keen!"

"Do you really think it best for Mr. Kerns to fall in love?"

"I do, certainly!" replied Gatewood with emphasis.

"Insolence Will Not Help You," She Said Sharply

"Because," continued the Tracer of Lost Persons, "I see little chance for him to do otherwise if I take up this case. Fate itself, in the shape of a young lady, is already on the way here in a railroad train."

"Good! Good!" exclaimed Gatewood. "Don't let him escape, Mr. Keen! I beg of you to take up his case! I urge you most seriously to do so. Mr. Kerns is now exactly what I was a year ago—an utterly useless member of the community—a typical bachelor who lives at his clubs, shirking the duties of a decent citizen."

"*Exactly*," said the Tracer. "Do you insist that I take this case? That I attempt to trace and find for Mr. Kerns a sort of happiness he himself has never found?"

"I implore you to do so, Mr. Keen."

"*Exactly*. If I do—if I carry it out as it has been arranged—or rather as the case seems to have already arranged itself, for it is rather a simple matter, I fancy—I do not exactly see how Mr. Kerns can avoid experiencing a—ahem!—a tender sentiment for the very charming young lady whom I—and chance—have designed for him as a partner through life."

"Excellent! Splendid!" shouted Gatewood through the telephone. "Can I do anything to aid you in this?"

"Yes," replied the Tracer, laughing. "If you can keep him amused for an hour or two before he goes after his suit-case it might make it easier for me. This young lady is due to arrive in New York at eight o'clock—a client of mine—coming to consult me. Her presence plays an important part in Mr. Kerns' future. I wish you to detain Mr. Kerns until she is ready to receive him. But of this he must know nothing. Good-by, Mr. Gatewood, and would you be kind enough to present my compliments to Mrs. Gatewood?"

"Indeed I will! We never can forget what you have done for us. Good-by."

"Good-by, Mr. Gatewood. Try to keep Mr. Kerns amused for two or three hours. Of course, if you can't do this, there are other methods I may employ—a dozen other plans already partly outlined in my mind; but the present plan, which accident and coincidence make so easy, is likely to work itself out to your entire satisfaction within a few hours. We are already weaving a web around Mr. Kerns; we already have taken exclusive charge of his future movements after he leaves the Lenox Club. I do not believe he can escape us. Good-night!"

Gatewood, enchanted, hung up the receiver. Song broke softly from his lips as he started in search of Kerns; his step was buoyant—a sort of subdued and modest prance.

"Now," he said to himself, "Tommy must take out his papers. The time is ended when he can issue letters of marque to himself, hoist sail, square away, and go cruising all over this metropolis at his own sweet will."

In the meanwhile, at the other end of the wire, Mr. Keen, the Tracer of Lost Persons, was preparing to trace for Mr. Kerns, against that gentleman's will, the true happiness which Mr. Kerns had never been able to find for himself.

He sat in his easy chair within the four walls of his own office inspecting a line of people who stood before him on the carpet forming a single and attentive rank. In this rank were five men: a policeman, a cab-driver, an agent of the telephone company, an agent of the electric company, and a reformed burglar carrying a kit of his trade-tools.

The Tracer of Lost Persons gazed at them, meditatively joining the tips of his thin fingers.

"I want the number on 36 East Eighty-third Street changed to No. 38, and the number 38 replaced by No. 36," he said to the policeman. "I want it done at once. Get a glazier and go up there and have it finished in an hour. Mrs. Kenna, caretaker at No. 36, is in my pay; she will not interfere. There is nobody in No. 38; Mr Kerns leaves there to-night and the Burglar Alarm Company takes charge to-morrow."

And, turning to the others: "You," nodding at the reformed burglar—"know your duty. Mike!" to the cab-driver, "don't miss Mr. Kerns at the Lenox Club. If he calls you before eleven, drive into the park and have an accident. And you," to the agent of the telephone company, "will sever all telephone connection in Mrs. Stanley's house; and you," to the official of the electric company, "will see that the circuit in Mrs. Stanley's house is cut so that no electric-light may be lighted and no electric-bell sound."

The Tracer of Lost Persons stroked his gray mustache thoughtfully. "And that," he ended, "will do, I think. Good-night."

He rose and stood by the door as the policeman headed the solemn file which marched out to their duty; then he looked at his watch, and, as it was already a few minutes after eight, he called up No. 36 East Eighty-third Street, and in a moment more had Mrs. Stanley on the wire.

"Good-evening," he said pleasantly. "I suppose you have just arrived from Rosylyn. I may be a little late—I may be very late, in fact, so I called you up to say so. And I wished to say another thing; to ask you whether your servants could recollect ever having seen a young man about the place, a rather attractive young man with excellent address and manners, five feet eleven inches, slim, but well built, dark hair, dark eyes, and dark mustache, offering samples of Georgia marble for sale?"

"Really, Mr. Keen," replied a silvery voice, "I have heard them say nothing about such an individual. If you will hold the wire I will ask my maid." And, after a pause: "No, Mr. Keen, my maid cannot remember any such person. Do you think he was a confederate of my butler?"

"I am scarcely prepared to say that; in fact," added Mr. Keen, "I haven't the slightest idea that this young man could have been concerned in anything of that sort. Only, if you should ever by any chance see such a man, detain him if possible until you can communicate with me; detain him by any pretext, by ruse, by force if you can, only detain him until I can get there. Will you do this?"

"Certainly. Please describe him again?"

Mr. Keen did so minutely.

"You say he sells Georgia marble by samples which he carries in a suit-case?"

"He *says* that he has samples of Georgia marble in his suit-case," replied the Tracer cautiously. "It might be well, if possible, to see what he has in his suit-case."

"I will warn the servants as soon as I return to Rosylyn. When may I expect you this evening, Mr. Keen?"

"It is impossible to say, Mrs. Stanley. If I am not there by midnight, I shall try to call next morning."

So they exchanged civil adieux; the Tracer hung up his receiver and leaned back in his chair, smiling to himself.

"Curious," he said, "that chance should have sent that pretty woman to me at such a time. . . . Kerns *is* a fine fellow, every inch of him. It hit him hard when he crossed with her to Southampton six years ago; it hit him harder when she married that Englishman. I don't wonder he never cared to marry after that brief week of her society; for she is just about the most charming woman I have ever met—red hair and all. . . . And if quick action is what is required, it's well to break the ice between them at once with a dreadful misunderstanding."

II

THE dinner that Kerns had planned for himself and Gatewood was an ingenious one, cunningly contrived to discontent Gatewood with home fare and lure him by its seductive quality into frequent re-visits to the club which was responsible for such delectable wines and viands.

A genial glow already enveloped Gatewood and pleasantly suffused Kerns. From time to time they held some rare vintage aloft, squinting through the crystal-imprisoned crimson with deep content.

"Not that *my* word is necessarily the *last* word concerning Burgundy," said Gatewood modestly; "but I venture to doubt that any club in America can match this bottle, Kerns."

"Now, Jack," wheedled Kerns, "isn't it pleasant to dine here once in a while? Be frank, man! Look about at the other tables—at all the pleasant, familiar faces—the same fine fellows, bless 'em!—the same smoky old ceiling, the same bum portraits of dead governors, the same old stag-heads on the wall. Now, Jack, isn't it mighty pleasant, after all? Be a gentleman and admit it!"

"Y-yes," confessed Gatewood, "it's all right for me once in a while, because I know that I am presently going back to my own home—a jolly lamp-lit room and the prettiest girl in Manhattan curled up in an armchair——"

"You're fortunate," said Kerns shortly. And for the first time there remained no lurking mockery in his voice.

Gatewood sat silent for a moment.

"So you really expect that your friend, Mr. Keen, is going to marry me to somebody, *nolens volens?*" asked Kerns.

"I *know* it! There you sit, savoring your Burgundy, idling over a cigar, happy, care free, fancy free, at liberty, as you believe, to roam off anywhere at any time and continue the eternal hunt for pleasure! That's what you *think!* Ha! Tommy, I know better!"

"Very fine," said Kerns admiringly. "Too bad it's due to the Burgundy."

"Never mind what my eloquence is due to," retorted Gatewood; "the fact remains that this is probably your last bachelor dinner. Kerns, old fellow! Here's to her! Bless her! I—I wish sincerely that we knew who she is and where to send those roses. Here's to the bride!"

He stood up very gravely and drank the toast, then, reseating himself, tapped the empty glass gently against the table's edge until it broke.

"You are certainly doing your part well," said Kerns admiringly. Then he swallowed the remainder of his Burgundy and looked up at the club clock.

"Eleven," he said with regret. "I've about time to go to Eighty-third Street, get my suit-case, and catch my train at One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Street." To a servant he said, "Call a hansom," then rose and sauntered downstairs to the cloakroom, where presently both men stood hatted and gloved, swinging their sticks.

"That was a fool bet you made," began Kerns; "I'll release you, Jack."

"Sorry, but I must insist on holding you," replied Gatewood, laughing. "You're going to your doom. Come on! I'll see you as far as the cab-door."

They walked out, and Kerns gave the cabby the street and number, and entered the hansom.

"Now," said Gatewood, "you're in for it! You're done for! You can't help yourself! I've won my twelve-gauge trap-gun already, and I'll have to set you up in table silver anyway, so it's an even break. You're all in, Tommy! The Tracer is on your trail!"

"What nonsense you talk," said Kerns, recovering his equanimity. "Nothing on earth can prevent me driving to 38 East Eighty-third Street, getting my luggage, and taking the Boston express. Your Tracer doesn't intend to stop my hansom and drag me into a cave, does he? You haven't put knock-outs into that Burgundy, have you? Then what in the dickens are you laughing at?"

But Gatewood, on the sidewalk under the lamplight, was still laughing as Kerns drove away, for he had recognized in the cab-driver a man he had seen in Mr. Keen's office, and he knew that the Tracer of Lost Persons had Kerns already well in hand.

The hansom drove on through the summer darkness between rows of electric globes drooping like huge white moon-flowers from their foliated bronze stalks, on up the splendid avenue, past the great brilliantly-illuminated hotels, past the white cathedral, past clubs and churches and the palaces of the wealthy; on, on along the park wall edged by its double rows of elms under which shadowy forms moved—lovers strolling in couples.

"Pooh," sniffed Kerns, "the whole world has gone love-mad and I'm the only sane man left."

But he leaned back in his cab and fell a-thinking of a thin girl with red hair and great gray eyes—a thin, frail creature, scarcely more than a child, who had held him for a week in a strange sorcery only to release him with a frightened smile leaving her impression upon his life forever.

And, thinking, he looked up, realizing that the cab had stopped in East Eighty-third Street before one of a line of brownstone houses, all externally alike.

Then he leaned out and saw that the house number was thirty-eight. That was the number of the Lees' house; he descended, bade the cabman await him, and, producing his latch-key, started up the steps whistling gayly.

But he didn't require his key for, as he reached the front door, he found, to his surprise and concern, that it swung partly open—just a mere crack.

"The mischief!" he muttered; "could I have failed to close it? Could anybody have seen it and crept in?"

He entered the hallway hastily and pressed the electric knob. No light appeared in the sconces.

"What the deuce!" he murmured; "something wrong with the switch!" And he hurriedly lighted a match and peered into the darkness. By the vague glimmer of the burning match he could distinguish nothing. He listened intently, tried the electric-switch again without success. The match burnt his fingers and he dropped it, watching the last red spark die out in the darkness.

Something about the shadowy hallway seemed unfamiliar; he went to the door, stepped out on the stoop, and looked up at the number on the transom. It was thirty-eight; no doubt about the house. Hesitating, he glanced around to see that his hansom was still there. It had disappeared.

(Continued on Page 20)

TALES OF THOMAS TABB

A Diplomat of Finance

By HENRY M. HYDE

TABB was in Europe when the first warning came. "Larsen has found backers at last," the note read. "His machine has been examined by the experts of the Alden crowd and it looks as if they were going into it. I'll keep you posted." It was signed by John Cord, the Wireless agent at Boston.

"Alden's rich," said Rixton, as he laid down the note. "And Larsen's got a good machine. We ought to've bought it when we had a chance."

"They're likely to put up the biggest fight we ever were up against," declared Fergus, the treasurer.

Rixton sent Cord's note to the old man in Rome, and just a week later the operator at the factory came rushing into the office of the general counsel with a hurry-up cablegram. "Say nothing, do nothing about Alden matter," it read. "Sailing to-morrow. Tabb."

So Rixton, shaking his head at the old man's strange order, called off all his men and settled down to await the arrival of the steamer. In the mean time further reports came in from Cord at Boston. Half an hour before Tabb walked into the office one morning the last message was taken from the wire.

"Alden about ready to sign papers," Cord telegraphed. "Must act at once or too late."

Tabb came in, shook hands all around with that limp palm of his, and presented each member of the executive committee with a carved Italian cameo scarf-pin, as a souvenir of his voyage. "Let me have all Cord's reports," he ordered Rixton, "and the Boston corporation directory. And tell John to have my horse here at eleven o'clock."

Promptly on the hour, the heavy, raw-boned white horse, which Thomas Tabb used under the saddle, was brought to the front of the factory and its master clambered up on its back. It went off up the river-road at a racking trot, the old man bouncing about like a sack of meal. From the pommel dangled the long brass trumpet which made a regular part of his riding equipment, and the presence of which gave the country people about Metropolis good reason for declaring that Thomas Tabb was "a little cracked."

But when the far-off, triumphant blast of that trumpet came to the ears of Rixton through the open window, he grinned across his desk at Livingstone and said: "Well, the old man's got it all figured out, hasn't he?"

At one o'clock the executive committee met.

"There are three chief men in the Alden crowd," Tabb began. "Alden himself—he's the fox to do the scheming; Brewster—the lion to put up an impressive front and do the heavy roaring; and little Bartlett—the bulldog, to close in and get a good grip when the fight gets hot. It's a good trio. The only fault with it is that it *is* a trio. Here's the way I'm going to meet them."

Then he lowered his voice and for five minutes outlined a scheme so simply ridiculous that the others could scarcely keep a look of amusement and incredulity out of their faces.

"Do you mean that you're going down to Boston to borrow a million dollars from the Alden crowd?" gasped Rixton finally.

"C-c-c-certainly, t-that's what I mean," stuttered the old man, his mind working so much faster than his tongue that the words got jammed.

Livingstone snickered aloud at that and Thomas Tabb's voice changed to a nasty rasp, while his blue eyes flashed about the big round table like the search-lights of a battleship in action.

"Fergus," he ordered, turning suddenly to the treasurer, "go upstairs and put your clerks to work on a complete financial statement of the company. Show how much we have to spend every year in fighting competition, how much advertising costs, and the big amount we've got invested in patents and tools that are out of date. Get it done by five o'clock. I'm going to Boston to-night and I'll take it with me. That'll be all."

The members of the executive committee got up and half-slunk out of the room, leaving the old man collapsed in his armchair, like a spent athlete.

"I'll show 'em how crazy I am!" he muttered, as Rixton closed the door.

The next morning but one Thomas Tabb walked into the office of Thomas Farson, a note broker, on Broad Street in Boston. Farson was his distant cousin.

"Well, Tabb, what brings you East so soon?" asked Farson. "I thought you had just got back from Europe?"

"On my way to New York after money," Tabb answered. "That business of ours is a rat-hole."

"Better let me get it for you."

"I want a million dollars."

"There's plenty of money in Boston. Let's talk it over."

In ten minutes they had reached the point where the different financial institutions to which application for so large a loan might be made were being discussed. As the name of each was mentioned, Thomas Tabb shook his head.

"Then there's the Exporters National," Farson went on. "That's the Alden bank."

"Yes, so I've heard," Tabb answered. "Well, I suppose it'll do as well as any. We might go over and talk to 'em."

President Atkinson, of the Exporters National, looked up from his desk in the dark little banking-office, which breathed of conservatism and established wealth, as the two men entered.

"Mr. Atkinson," said Farson, "this is Mr. Tabb, president of the Wireless Motor Company of Metropolis. We called to talk of a loan."

The banker could not conceal the look of exultation which came into his eyes as he shook hands with the stranger. Here was a chance to do some shrewd scouting for his principals. He stroked his square-clipped white side-whiskers as he ushered the callers into his private office. In five minutes Thomas Tabb had laid the case before him.

"Although we are perfectly sound and are making money," Tabb concluded, "our business requires a very

large investment, and it does not pay large dividends. If I had put the same capital and hard work into almost any other line I should have more to show for it."

"Very well, Mr. Tabb," answered the banker. "If you will call to-morrow afternoon at this hour we shall be able to give you an answer."

Hardly had Farson and Tabb left the bank when Atkinson got John Alden on the telephone. "Can you come over right away?" Atkinson asked.

One by one the three leaders of the Alden "crowd" were received by Atkinson in his private office. The old banker could not restrain a chuckle as he told the astonishing tale. "Here's the very man you're getting ready to fight comes in to borrow a million dollars and lays down a complete financial statement of his business on my desk."

John Alden picked up the treasurer's statement. "I wonder what this means, anyhow?" he asked suspiciously.

"Tabb told me," Atkinson explained, "that he could have borrowed the money nearer home, but he was afraid if it got out that he was getting a large loan it might stimulate competition." Again the old banker chuckled shrewdly.

"Has he got any suspicion of our plans?" asked Alden.

"In the first place," put in Bartlett firmly, "our plans haven't leaked. But if they had, why on earth should Tabb come down here and put his head in the lion's mouth by furnishing us with all the details of his business?"

The three put their heads together over the financial statement of the Wireless.

"Advertising expenses, $200,000; legal expenses, defending and prosecuting suits for infringements, $50,000; competition expenses, $100,000. Why, the thing fairly eats up money!" Brewster commented, as he finished reading. "Net profits, 1905, $103,256. Let's see, that's just over three per cent. on the total investment. Huh!"

"I wonder if these figures are correct?" questioned the suspicious Alden.

"Why, if we decide to make the loan," put in Atkinson, with the eagerness of one making a bright suggestion to his superiors, "we shall, of course, send an accountant out to verify them. I don't think they'll fool Sharpless very much."

"It's a safe loan, all right," urged Bartlett. "Let's make it and take the chance."

When Thomas Tabb came into the bank the next afternoon, Atkinson looked up at him solemnly. "We have gone over your statement, Mr. Tabb," he said, "and on the face of the figures we are prepared to make the loan at six per cent."

"If you loan the money," Tabb answered, "I, of course, expect you to send an accountant out to our plant to verify my figures, but I do not care to pay more than five and a half for it."

Atkinson hesitated a moment, but the chance to make an expert examination of the books of the Wireless Motor Company was worth more than $5000.

"If our expert, Mr. Sharpless, reports favorably we'll make the loan at that rate," he said finally.

Ten days later Thomas Tabb got back to the factory, coming directly from New York. He called an immediate meeting of the executive committee.

"I got the loan of a million dollars from the Alden crowd, all right," he began, "and, as we don't need the money, I took it over to New York and invested it in P. C. & W. six per cents. at one hundred and twenty. They'll net us five per cent. So the million will cost us only one-half of one per cent., or $5000 for the year. Now what have I accomplished? Here's a report from Cord:

"'The deal between Larsen and the Alden crowd is off. I don't know the reason, but something has happened to determine Alden and the rest of them to have nothing to do with the wireless motor business. Larsen is threatening suit, but he's got nothing in writing to show and the Alden people can beat him to death at a swearing match. I'm sorry to have misled you, but I know positively that two weeks ago the papers incorporating the Larsen Wireless Motor Company were all drawn up and only waited the final signatures. I'm investigating further.'

"I've simply paid $5000 for the privilege of convincing Alden and his partners that it wouldn't pay them to break into the wireless motor business," Thomas Tabb went on.

For Five Minutes He Went On, Denouncing the Policy of the Company Roundly

"Everybody but Larsen seems to have come out all right," Rixton put in, grinning.

"I offered him a thousand dollars for his patents," the old man returned, without the shadow of an answering smile. "He should have taken it."

One of the strongest points about Thomas Tabb as a business man is the fact that he utterly lacks a sense of humor.

II

"MR. TABB," said Rixton one day, as the executive committee went into session, "there's trouble brewing in the factory. The men are holding meetings, and if something isn't done soon we'll have a strike on our hands."

"How long has this been going on?" the old man asked sharply, lifting his red topknot with one involuntary movement of his right hand from the forehead backward.

"It began shortly after you started for Europe. And the agitation has been carried on so secretly that we haven't been able to locate the leaders. I've discharged more than thirty men in the last two weeks, but it's no use."

"Detectives?"

"I put six Pinkertons into the works a month ago. A week later I put in half a dozen others to watch the first bunch. Their reports are altogether contradictory and confusing. I believe that some of the unions have got their national organizers in here."

"Hum," said the old man slowly, tapping on the table with his eyeglasses in a way he had when a puzzling proposition was presented, "I guess I'll go out and take a ride."

Half an hour later Fergus, the treasurer, came over to Rixton's office. "Didn't I hear the bugle just now?" he asked, grinning.

Rixton laughed derisively. "Naw," he answered.

But just before noon there came a blast from the old brass horn which set the men laughing all through the factory. It was a blast of defiance sounded in the very faces of the conspirators, but they saw only its absurd side. Out in the foundry Bob Johnson roused a storm of derisive merriment by declaring that "The old man'll be comin' out of the small end of that in a couple of weeks."

Thomas Tabb walked into his private office.

"John," he ordered his private secretary, "send a gang of carpenters right away to build a platform six feet high and twenty feet square under the big elm on the river-bank. And have a placard printed and posted in every department, reading: 'The whistle will blow at four o'clock this afternoon to knock off work. All employees are requested to meet at that time about the platform under the elm tree on the river-bank. Business of great importance to everybody will be discussed.'

"Fergus," he called, as the treasurer passed through the hall, "I want you and all the members of the executive committee to be at this meeting sure. Bring your checkbook and a fountain-pen with you, too."

"Huh!" grunted Fergus, deep in his throat, as he heard the astonishing program. "I wonder what he's going to do now?"

Shortly after four o'clock, Thomas Tabb, at the head of the executive committee, climbed up on the hurriedly-built platform and sat down facing a good solid acre of half-amused and half-puzzled workmen. The old man wasted no time in preliminaries.

"Things aren't going right in the shops," he began. "I know that the company isn't treating you right in some ways and I don't think that some of you are treating the company right. I've been in Europe, opening up the foreign market, so that we sha'n't have to shut down during the summer, and I know mighty little about what's been going on here for the last three months. Now, I can't make things right until I know just what's wrong. I want you men to tell me. If you want more wages, get up and say so. If your hours are wrong, get up and tell us so. Here's your chance. Who's the first man?"

Bob Johnson, the iron moulder, bearded and burly and still black with grime, rose in the centre of that packed acre of workmen and walked to the table on the platform.

"We want some baths put in," he began. "We've got to have better ventilation. We aren't willing to pour more than two heats a day. And you've got to stop putting spotters on us, too."

For five minutes he went on, denouncing the policy of the company roundly. When he had finished, most of the men stood silent, with open mouths, waiting for the lightning to strike. But presently a round of applause broke out and Thomas Tabb himself led in the clapping.

"That's the way to talk!" he cried when he could make himself heard. "That's fine! That's just the kind of thing we want to know! What's your name?" he called out, and the moulder answered:

"Bob Johnson."

"Mr. Fergus," the old man went on, speaking so that everybody could hear, "that talk is worth a hundred dollars to the Wireless Motor Company. Make out a check for a hundred and give it to Mr. Johnson. Come over here, Johnson, and get your money. Now who's the next man to tell us what we want to know?"

After a moment's hesitation another man got up. The temptation to show one's power as an orator and to get well paid for it at the same time was too great to be resisted. Half a dozen speeches were made in quick succession, all pointing out the manifold delinquencies of the company. And each of these orators, in his turn, was called to the platform and given a check for fifty dollars.

"Johnson got more because he was brave enough to break the ice," the old man explained.

Finally there were no further responses and Thomas Tabb declared the meeting adjourned. The executive committee went straight back to its room.

"Here are the names of the labor agitators you've been trying to locate," the old man said, laying the list of orators on the table. "Discharge every one of them to-morrow morning."

Rixton picked up the list and looked it over.

"You've forgotten Bob Johnson, the first speaker, Mr. Tabb," he said.

"No," answered the old man with utter gravity; "I promised him a permanent job for getting up and starting the procession."

The Prisoner at the Bar

By ARTHUR TRAIN

Author of McAllister and His Double

"Yes" is Generally Accompanied by an Irrepressible Grin

THE VERDICT

THE judge having delivered his charge, and the jury having picked up their collection of miscellaneous garments and retired to the jury-room, a court-officer claps the prisoner upon the shoulder and leads him away to the prison pen. Who can describe, or even imagine, the feelings of the unhappy wretch as he waits below in the tainted atmosphere of the cells to hear the decision of the twelve silent men whose faces his eyes have searched vainly from day to day for some indication of encouragement? Once the door of the courtroom has closed behind him he is conducted along a narrow corridor, past the jury-rooms, to the head of a flight of iron steps at the foot of which stands a keeper ready to receive him.

As the prisoner descends the stairs, the attendant notifies the keeper that the defendant is on his way down. Once he is safely below the keeper shouts "All right" to the officer above, who returns once more to his duties in the courtroom. Since there is little danger of an escape, the officers sometimes become a trifle lax in the handling of prisoners awaiting sentence.

An amazing incident occurred during the past year which shows how much care is necessary in guarding a defendant who confidently expects a verdict of conviction. At the conclusion of a trial for grand larceny the jury retired and the prisoner was conducted to the head of the stairs leading down to the pen. The officer above notified the keeper below when the prisoner was about half-way down, and distinctly heard the latter reply "All right." He thereupon departed. The keeper, however, had not uttered a syllable and was entirely unaware of the return of the defendant, who, being something of a ventriloquist, had answered for him, and then calmly reascended the stairs and passed through the corridor to another courtroom where he mingled with the crowd, and later had no difficulty in making his escape into the main corridor and thence into the street. When the jury presently returned and the prisoner was sent for, his escape was discovered. The Court waited patiently while the pens, corridors and finally the entire building were searched without disclosing a trace of the prisoner. Meanwhile the jury, who had found the defendant guilty, wondered why their verdict was not received. According to law, however, all the proceedings incident to a trial for felony up to and including the rendition of the verdict must take place in the presence of the prisoner, and in this case his voluntary absence compelled the Court to declare a "mistrial." When it became evident that the defendant was unlikely to return, terrible was the humiliation of the court-officers who, for a few days, lived in terror of losing their official heads, if not of being imprisoned and fined for contempt.

The prisoner's wife, however, had been present throughout the trial in the courtroom, and as his escape was entirely extemporaneous she was as surprised as anybody else. After the discharge of the jury several detectives followed her to her home in Hoboken. Late in the evening she left the house in response to a message and met her husband in a deserted part of the city where he was recaptured. He was immediately brought back to New York and once more tried; but this time he pleaded guilty. From a dramatic point of view, it is to be regretted that the jury at the first trial had not found a verdict of "not guilty."

As the first talesman who happens to be selected for the jury in any given case becomes *ipso facto* its foreman, amusing incidents sometimes occur, owing to the latter's inexperience. Where an indictment contains but a single count, as, for example, "receiving stolen goods," the foreman's answer to the clerk's interrogation—"Do you find the prisoner guilty or not guilty?"—is, of course, simple enough; he answers "guilty" or "not guilty," or "guilty, with a recommendation to the mercy of the Court"; but where the indictment contains either a number of counts set forth separately, or the crime charged is of such a character that the jury may find in a lesser degree, some confusion is apt to result. If, for example, a defendant is being tried for murder in the first degree, the Court is obliged to submit, under the law, not only murder in its first degree, but the lesser crimes of murder in the second degree, manslaughter in the first degree, manslaughter in the second degree, and frequently assault in one or more degrees. Sometimes the foreman has a bad attack of the rattles and forgets entirely what he was going to say and stands staring open-mouthed until the clerk comes to his assistance.

In a recent case where the Court charged the jury that they could find the defendant guilty of murder, manslaughter or assault, or else acquit him on the ground that he was justified in taking the life of the deceased, the jury retired and deliberated for many hours. As the time dragged on the defendant became convinced that he was to be convicted. Late at night the jury informed the Court that they had agreed upon a verdict. They filed back and took their places in the box.

The defendant was arraigned, pale with apprehension. The clerk arose.

"Gentlemen of the jury," said he, "have you agreed upon a verdict?"

"We have," replied the foreman.

"The jury will rise," continued the clerk. "The defendant will rise."

The jury and prisoner arose.

"Jurymen, look upon the prisoner. Prisoner, look upon the jury," continued the clerk, and turning to the foreman: "How say you? Do you find the defendant guilty or not guilty?"

"Guilty ——" stammered the foreman.

The defendant uttered a loud groan and collapsed into the arms of the court-attendant beside him.

"*Of justifiable homicide*," hastily added the inexperienced foreman. In spite of the laughter of the rest of the jurymen and the smiles of the Court, it took some moments to convince the unnerved prisoner that he was not to be electrocuted.

In a case in the upper part of New York State where the defendant had been charged with a particularly atrocious crime—namely, setting fire to a building occupied by human beings, one of whom was burned to death—the judge charged explicitly and in detail as to the different degrees of homicide of which the defendant might be found guilty. The jury returned and, on being asked their verdict, replied through their foreman that they found the defendant guilty of *arson*. The situation was anomalous and the Court found itself in a somewhat embarrassing position.

"Well, gentlemen," finally said the judge, "however much the evidence may seem to warrant your verdict, you cannot, under my charge, find the defendant guilty of arson. You will have to go back and resume your deliberations upon the question of whether he is guilty or innocent of murder or manslaughter."

So the jury trailed out. In a few moments they returned with a verdict of murder in its first degree.

A very considerable proportion of jury trials in criminal cases result in disagreements. The question of reasonable doubt is always a troublesome one, and even where all the jury believe the defendant guilty, as likely as not half of them will not think that they are convinced beyond what they regard as a reasonable doubt. For this reason many jurors are of the opinion that what is known as a Scotch verdict, or a verdict of "Not proven," should be allowed. The writer has been informed on good authority that in one of the recent trials of Nan Patterson eleven of the twelve jurymen believed her guilty, but that only six of them were convinced beyond a reasonable doubt. Had the Scotch verdict been permitted, it would probably have been rendered in this case.

Verdicts of murder in the first degree are exceedingly rare and are, practically, only to be expected when the circumstances surrounding the crime are peculiarly atrocious. It is also a well-known fact that juries rarely find a verdict in a degree of crime higher than the one for which the majority vote upon the first ballot. For example, if on the first ballot the jury stands five for murder in the first degree, six for murder in the second degree and one for manslaughter, only a miracle could account for a final verdict of murder in the first degree. In other words, a jury will almost never work *up* their verdict, argument invariably tending to work *down* to a lesser degree. Most technical cases of murder in the first degree result in verdicts of murder in the second degree, and most cases of murder in the second degree result in verdicts of manslaughter.

The jury having rendered a verdict of conviction, say of murder in the first degree, there remains to counsel but one last act which he can perform in his client's behalf, namely, to demand that the jury be polled. This must be done upon the requirement of either the defendant or the people, in which case "they must be severally asked whether it is their verdict; and if any one answers in the negative the jury must be sent out for further deliberation." The writer has never heard of a jury which, on being polled, showed a disagreement, the *locus penitentiæ* thus offered being almost never availed of in point of fact. It is not unusual, however, as the roll is called to see various members of the jury look apprehensively toward one of their number who has evidently put up a hard fight in the jury-room for a lesser degree and may be "of the same opinion still."

Defendants who are convicted rarely show any emotion when receiving the verdict. This is of course to be expected, as the defendant, if guilty, has been anticipating that he will probably so be found by the jury and has steeled himself for the occasion, and, as an innocent man is practically never convicted, he rarely receives the unpleasant surprise of being adjudged guilty of the crime charged against him. Hundreds of defendants, however, who confidently expect to be convicted, are acquitted through the leniency of the jury. Their exclamations of gratification and joy upon such occasions are frequently most amusing.

Such a defendant not seldom thanks the Court and the jury for their kindness, and in some cases his thanks are certainly due to those who have violated the letter and spirit of their oaths in acquitting him. The writer recalls one old colored mammy who, on being acquitted of stealing some wash which had been confided to her care, curtsied in all directions and remarked:

"Ah t'anks your Honor, an' Ah t'anks your honors, gen'lemen ob de jury, one an' all."

An Irishman, who had been but a few weeks in this country, and who had been acquitted of the charge of stealing a truck and horses which had been left in his charge, on learning of his acquittal invited the jury, collectively, in a loud voice, to come across the street and have a drink.

"Counselor" Nolan was a famous member of the New York bar, not by virtue of his learning, but on account of his delicious brogue and ready wit. He was a large man with a protruding stomach and a manner and dignity which

Announced Defiantly that He was Ready to Stay There as Long as Anybody

would have done credit to a Lord Chancellor. On one occasion he was retained to defend a brother Irishman who had been indicted for shooting a man. The prosecution had an excellent case on every point save the principal one in issue —the shooting. Upon this they had absolutely no evidence at all. At the conclusion of the People's case, Nolan, who had been sitting in an attitude of profound thought, arose, ponderously, and instead of asking the judge to direct the jury to acquit, which every one expected he would do as a matter of course, turned to the jury and began his opening address.

"Gentlemen of the jury," he exclaimed, in his rich, mellow voice, "we will show ye thot the shooting of the unfortoonate complaynint be me unfortoonate client was an act av self-defense joostifiable in the eyes of the law, in the sight of man, and in that av the Almighty."

He then called the defendant, who, under cross-examination, supplied all the missing pieces of evidence in the People's case. The jury retired and in a few moments returned with a verdict of guilty.

Nolan seemed overwhelmed with sorrow and chagrin. The picture of pompous dejection, he took his stand by the side of his client while the latter gave his pedigree.

When this formality had been concluded, the judge, before imposing sentence, turned to him and remarked:

"Mr. Nolan, have you no motion to make?"

"I beg your Honor's pardon. What did your Honor say?"

"Have you no motion?"

Nolan looked regretfully at the Court and heaved a prolonged sigh.

"Shure, your Honor, my breast is filled *with emotion* at seein' me poor, innocint client found guilty an' sint up to Sing Sing!"

Invited the Jury Collectively, in a Loud Voice, to Come Across the Street and Have a Drink

Before the jury is discharged, however, and the prisoner remanded to the Tombs for sentence, he is required to answer certain questions relative to his age, parentage, education and previous convictions. If the spectator is fortunate enough to be able to forget the solemnity of what has taken place, he may well be entertained, not only at the answers given by the defendant, but at the method of conducting the examination by the court-officer. The clerk takes the indictment and with a large rubber die stamps upon it the statement that the defendant, on being arraigned, made answer to the questions put to him, as follows:

Counsel Assigned .....
Sex .....
Age .....
Nativity
Residence . ....
Occupation
Married or Single
Education
Religious Instruction .....
Parents Living ... .
Temperate or Intemperate...
Before Convicted .....

Of course, the court-officer who repeats the prisoner's answers to the clerk is usually so familiar with the order of the questions as to render any vocal action upon the part of the clerk unnecessary. The officer stands by the prisoner and, leaning over, asks in a low tone how old he is, if his parents are living, if he is addicted to the use of liquor, if he has had any religious instruction, or if he has been previously convicted of crime. It is really the officer to whom the defendant makes his replies, the former repeating them in a loud voice to the clerk. In some courts the clerk does not put the questions at all, but the officer merely gives in their order the answers of the defendant.

The writer recalls one defendant who on being asked his business, replied simply: "I'm a *common gambler*, sir."

For a convict to give under oath false answers to the questions thus put to him is, of course, perjury. It is frequently of no small importance for a prisoner to conceal his identity, or at least his record. But if a Bible is thrust into his right hand he is loath to put himself within the statute governing false swearing, for the chances are all in favor of his being found out, in which case his punishment will be severe. The writer remembers a dramatic incident of a man who thus endeavored to prevent his past offenses coming to the knowledge of the judge. He bore, however, all the earmarks of an ex-convict and the Court became suspicious that all was not right. He had just been convicted of stealing a purse. The jury had remained out until eleven o'clock at night and the courtroom was practically deserted. The prisoner was placed before the bar. We will call him Graham. The clerk put the usual questions, and then inquired:

"Have you ever been convicted before?"

"No," answered the prisoner in a low voice.

There was a long pause, and then the judge, looking down intently from the bench, said:

"Graham, is that the truth?"

"Yes, sir," replied the prisoner.

"Are you quite sure?" insisted the Court.

"Yes, sir."

"Swear him!" ordered the judge.

The officer started to place the Bible in Graham's hand, but he refused to take it.

"No, no, I can't!" he whispered. "I can't—I—I—it's no use!" he added.

"When were you convicted?"

"I served six months for petty larceny about five years ago."

"Is that all?"

"Yes, sir."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, sir."

"Quite sure? Think again."

"Yes, sir."

"Swear him!" Again the book was placed in his hand and again it was declined.

"I served three years in Charlestown for larceny, and was discharged two months ago."

"Is that all?"

"Oh, God! Isn't that enough?" suddenly groaned the prisoner, breaking down completely. "No, sir, it isn't all! It's always been the same old story! Concord, Joliet, Elmira, Springfield, Sing Sing, Charlestown—yes, six times. *I'm a jail-bird!*"

A student of our institutions could not do better than to subject himself to jury duty for the purpose of getting material at first hand as to the desirability of the system. He would probably come forth with a higher regard for the intelligence and common-sense of his fellow-beings. Undeniably, however, he would listen to some strange arguments and observe the workings of some extraordinary headpieces. After all, it is not the *way* a juryman reaches his conclusion but the *nature* of it that is important, and as most of our hard-hearted citizens have little difficulty in "sensing" a proposition, the greater variety of means perhaps the surer the end.

Juries present a variety of peculiar phenomena. In the first place, duty as talesman, although it may be poison to many, is meat to as many more. A distinguished editor, well known and beloved in his neighborhood for his charitable works, makes it a point to serve whenever called, although he might easily get himself excused. While undergoing his first experience he was surprised to overhear his washerwoman stigmatizing his conduct to the cook in the following language:

"And 'tis surprised Oi am for Mister —— to be afther takin' the bread out av the mouths of the poor by servin' on the jury. There's many a starvin' man would be glad to av the chance! An' he with all the money he wants! Ochee! It's a quare world, with the rich gettin' richer and the poor poorer ivery day!" The gentleman, however, is still setting an example of good citizenship.

Take it by and large, although good-naturedly regarding it as a nuisance, most jurymen manage to extract a considerable amount of amusement and an equal proportion of profit from their period of service. Fully a third of them serve over and over again, but the surprising fact is the extraordinary number of men of mature years who have never served at all. How they have escaped not even they themselves are able to explain.

You can educate a man into being a good, sensible juror just as you can educate him to run an elevator or judge the points of a horse. Few jurors get the run of things until they have served on several cases - hence the extraordinary acquittals and sometimes convictions at the beginning of the term. The foremen are all at sea as to what they shall do and say. In a recent case the jury returned a verdict of "*Pretty nearly* guilty."

Before rendering a verdict almost every jury takes the opportunity in the jury-room to stretch its legs and satisfy its craving to smoke. Juries rarely come back in less time than it takes to burn a cigar. Although this may torture the prisoner, it would seem a fairly-earned perquisite on the part of his judges. Some jurors are instinctively, and a few are actually, lawyers. These rarely add much to the general usefulness of the panel. Jurymen not infrequently seize the opportunity to display their oratorical ability, since their audience cannot get away and must perforce hear them out. The writer recalls one instance where, in a well-known extortion case, an enthusiastic talesman made a digest of the speeches of counsel for the defense and of the prosecution, and then prepared a long harangue of his own which he committed to memory.

Uttered a Loud Groan and Collapsed

Sometimes the Foreman has a Bad Attack of the Rattles and Forgets Entirely What He was Going to Say

When the jury were safely locked into their council-chamber, this self-sacrificing gentleman arose and began: "In this case the defense claims, thus and so." After he had repeated practically in toto the argument of the defense, he then got his second wind and continued: "On the other hand, the People assert, thus and *so*." At the end of about an hour he had reached his own humble views of the case, which he expanded at great length, concluding with a peroration in which the great American eagle could be heard screaming all the way into the courtroom. The jury, probably out of sheer fatigue, took but a single vote and found the defendant guilty. The orator to this day maintains that he "did it."

Although the deliberations of the jury are theoretically, and to all intents and purposes practically, secret, the rooms in which they are confined are often so located that officers on duty, turnkeys and other persons, are occasionally made involuntary eavesdroppers. It is said that in other and more barbarous times interested parties would lurk near by in order to get an idea of how the wind was blowing. There is a story, for which the writer assumes no responsibility, that ten or fifteen years ago a noted prosecutor was accustomed to follow the jury out, climb upon a ladder, and listen at the transom to its arguments and comments; and there is also a report, which, perhaps, is but a fable, that there was a knothole in the jury-room of the old "Brownstone" building, from which the plug was removed to allow of similar surreptitious observations. The rumors which come from the direction of the jury-room are quite as apt to be incorrect as accurate, and neither prosecutor nor prisoner really knows what is the result of the jury's deliberations until the foreman's word ends the suspense.

Many strange and amusing stories are told of how certain historic verdicts in criminal cases were reached. Perhaps the most famous is that of the trial of the first indictment which followed the robbery of the Manhattan Bank. The case was tried before Judge Cowing in the General Sessions, and after a speedy, but conclusive, trial the jury retired. A vote, which was immediately taken, showed that they stood eleven to one for conviction. The twelfth juror was obstinate and no progress was made whatever by the others. The situation remained unchanged during the night and up to twelve o'clock of the next day, which happened to be a Saturday. At that hour Judge Cowing sent word that he was going downtown and would not return until two o'clock. In some way the jury got the idea that the judge intended to lock them up until Monday if they did not agree. They accordingly asked for five minutes more before the judge left the building. This was granted and at the end of that time they announced that they had agreed. Into court they filed.

"Have you agreed upon a verdict?" asked the clerk.

"We have," replied the foreman.

"How say you? Do you find the defendant guilty or not guilty?"

"*Not guilty*," answered the foreman defiantly. The defendant almost collapsed, and the judge gave the jury a frank piece of his mind in no uncertain language. Rather than suffer any further inconvenience this high-minded jury had simply faced about and voted to acquit.

THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN

Human Documents in the Case of the New Slavery

By Mrs. JOHN VAN VORST

"We Don't Care About Havin' the 'Help' Talk Much"

THE somewhat imposing name of Pell City has been given to a cluster of houses lodged in the valley between Attalla and Birmingham. On its outskirts a mantle of smoke veils the heavens and indicates, without doubt, the locality of the cotton mills. It was thither that I made my way.

Having waited for the 12:30 bell to sound, I got into conversation with one of the older "hands" and joined once more the slow procession which moved toward the factory gates. Thus, without difficulty, I entered the weave-room, whence I could make my way as I pleased to other parts of the mill.

I paused a moment to watch a boy of twelve, his shoulders were bowed; his brows drawn together; his hands were like claws. With lightning rapidity he snatched the old quills from the pins and dropped the new ones in their places, and when the spindles stuck he drove them down with a nervous stroke that plainly said: "You *must* go on!" Yet, when I talked with him, his face lighted up.

"How long have you been at work?"

"In a cotton mill?" His tone implied that he had always been working somewhere.

"Yes," I said, "in a cotton mill."

"Four years."

"Don't you get tired?"

"A little," he nodded, passing on along the frame out of hearing, like some sombre mechanical spring which had been wound up and which could do nothing but "go" until its time came for running down.

Three little sweepers followed me out into the yard with an evident desire to talk. It was with kindly good humor that they put the usual question: "Ever worked in a mill?" And, having received an affirmative answer, they stuffed their hands in their pockets and leaned up comfortably against the doorstep where we stood, ready to make friends, presenting all the appearance of three diminutive men who knew just about what to expect in life.

One was from Georgia, one from Alabama and one from Kentucky, and, though the oldest was but thirteen, they had all worked in half a dozen different places.

"Why do you move around so much?" I asked, impressed here, as I had been everywhere, by the nomadic propensities of the operatives.

The Alabamian explained in an indulgent way: "Why, that's how mill folks are, always thinkin' they can make a little more in the next place."

And the Kentuckian added: "Money's the thing they're all after. You spend it all when you crave travelin', but you sure do make out to have a good time."

I followed this by a question which I expected to be met with a burst of enthusiasm on the subject of football or some other sport.

"What," I asked, "do you like *best* of all?"

There was a moment's pause, and then one said:

"Weavin'."

"At what age can you come in here?"

The Alabamian grinned, showing a row of strong, white teeth, and lines of wrinkles on his freckled nose.

"Oh, *any* age from one to forty!"

And the Kentuckian, more poetic, took up the refrain:

"Any age from knee-high to a grasshopper until you can touch the moon."

"Don't you have to show a certificate?"

"You do in some places," the Georgian responded, speaking with the authority of experience.

At Pell City proper, there were, I found, fifty children attending school. In the mill town, out of the fifteen hundred hands who formed the inhabitants (three hundred and fifty of whom were of the school age) there were but eighty or ninety scholars under the direction of the two faithful teachers who confessed themselves discouraged at the frequent absences among their pupils, and the nomadic disposition of the mill "folk," which drives them on about every six months from one town to another, attracted by new possibilities—above all, tired of the old ones—who need, in their very weariness, the stimulation of change.

Seeking always a chance to make friends with some of the little laborers, I went into the grove of trees which, because, perhaps, of a few benches and an occasional dilapidated swing, was known by the name of "park."

It was not long before a little brown-eyed girl in a blue cotton dress, with a woolen hood over her head, came along.

"Have you ever worked in the mill?" I asked.

"Yes, meaum. I worked there most a year, makin' forty a day, but, when the new 'super' came, he cut me deown to twenty-eight, and I sure did quit."

She passed on, and presently my meditations were interrupted by a little being with short hair, a pink gingham frock, a bruise over one eye, and a bag of groceries under either arm. I had already noticed her when I visited the primary class, so I said:

"Do you like school?"

The angry bruise over her forehead held her little brow rigid, but there was a smile in her eyes, and she said:

"I sure do *love* school!"

As she spoke she tugged at one of the grocery bags, opened it, and offered me some candy. Then, having lodged a piece at the back of her mouth, she went on:

"I've worked in the mill, but I don't love that. I'm the only one up home that ain't workin' neow. Jeff and Musie and Loona and Doshie is all't work."

She took a place beside me on the "park" bench, and deposited her bundles.

"I was right smart sick the other day," she continued. "A little boy hit me with a rock," she touched the wound on her forehead, "but I kep' on't school 'cause I'm so afraid if I once stay eout my stepmother'd make me go back t' the mill. I wouldn't miss school for anything." She smiled wisely, and plunged her hand in the paper bag for another candy.

"Does your father work?" I asked. The smile faded, and the little face grew very serious.

"He died," she said, "the week after we come here. He had the asthma. His job was awful hard; he worked nights in the dye-room. He used to have to keep the windows open so's he could get air enough."

She hurried on with a rapid description of his sufferings, and then, more slowly, she said:

"That night he went over to get a drink, and just's he come to the pump he dropped deown. The men had to tote him home. His head was like this—and his arms were like this." Her own little head fell forward on her breast as she spoke, and her arms hung lifeless. Then she added:

"Death struck him when he fell."

After a moment she began again:

"Are you a good dressmaker?"

"Not very. Are you?"

She laughed. "Good enough to make my own clothes."

"Did you make that dress?"

"I make them all except Sunday ones."

In her family there were, I found, five grown members earning pay at the mill sufficient to support them comfortably. Yet, because the youngest was already eleven—that is to say, because she represented a daily stipend of fifty cents—there was a determination to make her a bread-winner—a determination so strong that only her own courage and valiance had so far been able to ward off the evil day when she should move from the school-bench into the spinning-room.

It is natural that the first impulse of these people who have deserted their farms for the factories should be to embrace every opportunity for gain which presents itself, and it is all the more necessary, therefore, that they should be made to see the ultimate profit of giving their children some education.

For this end nothing could be more promptly effective than a compulsory school law.

The question of reaching Huntsville was a serious one. "We can't rightly say what the route is," the Gadsden Hotel clerk explained. "Lots o' folks goes there, but none ever comes back."

Huntsville, it was true, partly because of the gloominess of the town itself, partly because of its indirect approach by water—suggested the village of Eden which Dickens has described in his Martin Chuzzlewit. A bulky, dingy steamer it was that conveyed us from one landing to another on the Tennessee River. For three hours the double side-stacks sent forth whirling columns of feathery black smoke; the rear paddle-wheel beat a snowy path in its watery way; a chilly mist enveloped the ample bushes, the rounded sides of which, overhanging the banks, swept the swift surface of the stream. Within the cabin of the "Chattahoochee" the dreary passengers talked in undertones, deluged the ship's utensils with copious expectorations, and waited with that air of resignation which characterizes animals in transportation.

Huntsville was reached at last. The clouds of soot, which in the small towns had indicated at once the locality of the mill, were here spread in a sombre veil over the entire city. Determined always to "go" until I was stopped, and to see all I could before I was "put out," I started at once for the mills, about a mile or so from the Huntsville City Hall. It was too late to join the hands in their noon return, and a forbidding wall with padlocked gates drove me as a last resource to the superintendent's office.

What Could They be Expected to Look Like?

Editor's Note—This is the third of a series of articles by Mrs. Van Vorst in which the victims of the new slavery tell their own stories.

"I haven't got any one to send with you," he said, "but I guess you can find your way through all right."

Straight I made all speed to the spinning-room, and as I entered this vast domain I thought, at a first glance, that it was empty. Then, having passed along one end, I perceived, toiling laboriously, quantities of children so small that their heads did not appear over the low frames! Fourteen of these tiny spinners I questioned: three of them only "claimed" to be twelve, and these had all been several years at work.

"Have you ever worked in a cotton mill?" one small girl asked me, in her shrill little voice.

"No," I answered.

"I tell you," she answered, "it's real hard work."

"Is it?"

"Well," she smiled, "it is for us little kids, anyway."

"Did you ever go to school?" I asked.

"No, but I'd just love to." Here she threw out her little hands with a sorrowful gesture, and added: "I'm only twealve. I've been workin' 'most four years, and I haven't got enough education to read and write."

The heat in this great hall was intense. In order to maintain the proper pliability of the cotton thread the atmosphere of the spinning-rooms must be kept at a very high temperature. In addition to the steam-pipes which encircle the walls there are, at intervals, open valves which pour forth diminutive clouds of vapor, taking from the air every breath of its vitality.

It was not long before one of the overseers, noticing how freely I was talking with the little, toil-worn, ghastly waifs who plied their way up and down before the whirling spindles, came over and began to make several maudlin excuses:

"We don't care about havin' the 'help' talk much," he said.

"Ah?"

"No. You see they don't allow no children under twelve to work in the mills. Of course," he added, "our children all is twelve."

"Do you think so?" I asked.

"My, yes! All our help has certificates. We keep a notary busy the whole time."

I continued my round. The next child I questioned, having noticed perhaps that the "boss" had spoken to me, answered in this way when I asked her age:

"I'm teaun. No—I mean—I'm twealve."

Nobody could pass through such spinning-rooms as I have described and not cry out lustily against child labor. No moderate friend of the manufacturers, no partisan of the rapid industrial development in the South could find a single argument with which to meet the unspoken plea of this army of little toilers. They bear no resemblance to healthy children. They look like the pale, insipid flowers that straggle up in the furrows of the wheat field when the harvest has been gathered.

An incident at another of the mills, which I subsequently visited at Huntsville, confirmed the remarks made by the little spinning hand at Alabama City: "When the gentleman that owns the mills comes around to visit, we hide the littlest hands so he won't see 'em."

The proprietor of these mills happened, while I was there, to be passing through the village where his "plant" is situated. There was, in consequence, some reluctance to let me visit the spinning-room. The dye-rooms, the weaving-rooms and engine-houses were shown with a free conscience, since no "little help" can be employed in these localities. But my guide from the office explained to me they were "cleaning the machinery" in the spinning-room and "most of the hands" were "loafing," so there wasn't "anything much" to see.

Let us hope that this sort of deception keeps the mill-owner from knowing really what wraiths of childhood are doing his work for him. Otherwise he would too easily appear in the guise of a modern monster crushing human life in order to get the full price of his greed. And the snowy threads in the spinning-room, as they whirl about the spindles like an immaculate, diaphanous cloud, might seem to this same mill-owner to be drenched in the scarlet that speeds outward from little fingers, whose forces, as their life's blood, ebb from them while they toil!

Over the rolling country outside of the town, in the direction of West Huntsville, there is a succession of mills: one with its rows of wooden houses, its schools, its stores, its chapel, and others of minor importance, made, indeed, to look insignificant by comparison with the giant plant which flings its human débris, when work is done, into a surrounding group of yellow frame two-story houses, each of which is inhabited by two families, and surrounded by a yard, sprinkled over, as were the sidewalks in this desolate town, with slag from the furnaces. An occasional attempt to grow flowers in these paupers' areas had been thwarted by an old-time habit of sweeping on to the incipient flower-beds such rubbish as came daily from within the house: ashes, old rags, barrel hoops, chicken feathers, paper bags, tin cans. The result was an unenviting accumulation. . . .

As all attempts to trespass within the well-guarded inclosure of this mill were unavailing, I resorted to a post of observation opposite the gates through which the operatives filed out at noon, and in again when the clock's hands had sped onward to 12:45, having left them this only too brief three-quarters of an hour in which to cook and eat their dinner. In the multitude that came drifting, scurrying, whirling past me there were scores of children under twelve years old. Their clothes were flecked with cotton lint, gray and dusky like their ashen faces; they were bowed and drooping with a strange nervous animation that became them as pitifully as friskiness becomes an unconscious old age. What could they be expected to look like?

Save on Saturdays, they work twelve hours and five minutes a day, these little "hands."

Having been peremptorily stopped by the janitor when I attempted to follow with the procession into the mill, I repaired to the school, and there found, out of a population of six hundred possible scholars, about one hundred children enrolled on the lists.

"Where are the rest?" I asked the teacher.

"In the mill," she answered solemnly. "Even the littlest boys and girls from the primary classes are constantly taken out and made to work as long as their mothers or fathers see fit."

"We have to switch the children," the teacher volunteered, when I questioned her about a birch rod which lay across her desk. "Without switching them we couldn't keep any sort of order here."

And again, perceiving a crippled boy, I asked how he had lost his arm, and received from the teacher this amazing answer:

"Oh, he lost it in the mill! We get lots of them maimed, with one finger, or a hand, or an arm gone. They go in so young to work that they don't know what machinery is, and they try 'just for fun' to see how near they can come to it without 'touching.' It's rather a dangerous game sometimes."

The Incomplete Amorist

By E. Nesbit

XXVI—THE MIRACLE

IT SEEMED quite dark down in the forest—or rather, it seemed, after the full good light that lay upon the summit of the rocks, like the gray dream-twilight under the eyelids of one who dozes in face of a dying fire.

"Don't let's go straight back to Grez," said Betty when the pony was harnessed, "let's go on to Fontainebleau and have dinner and drive back by moonlight. Don't you think it would be fun? We've never done that."

"Thank you," he said. "You *are* good."

His eyes met hers in the green shadow, and she was satisfied because he had understood that this was her reply to his appeal to her not to avoid him "in the little time there was left."

"Look here," she said. "I've been thinking about it ever since you said it. And I'm not going to let it spoil anything. Only I don't want you to think I don't understand. And I'm most awfully proud that you should—I am really. And I'd rather be liked by you than by any one ——"

"Almost," said Temple a little bitterly.

"I don't feel sure about that part of it—really. One feels and thinks such a lot of different things—and they all contradict everything else, till one doesn't know what anything means, or what it is one really—I can't explain. But I don't want you to think your having talked about it makes any difference. At least, I don't mean that at all. What I mean is, that of course I like you ever so much better now I know that you like me, and—oh, I don't want to—I don't want you to think it's all no good, because really and truly I don't know."

All this time she had kept her hand on his wrist. Now he laid his other hand over it.

"Dear," he said, "that's all I want, and more than I hoped for now. I won't say another word about it—ever, if you'd rather not—only if ever you feel that it is me, and not that other chap, then you'll tell me, won't you?"

"I'll tell you now," said Betty, "that I wish with all my heart it *was* you and not the other."

When he had said good-night at the deserted door of the courtyard Betty slipped through the trees to her pavilion. There was a lamp in the garden room—as usual.

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Its light poured out and lay like a yellow carpet on the terrace, and lent to the foliage beyond that indescribable air of festivity.

"I'll just see if there are any letters," she told herself. "There always might be: from Aunt Julia or Miss Vosper or—some one."

She went along the little passage that led to the stairs. The door that opened from it into the garden room was narrowly ajar. A slice of light through the chink stood across the passage.

Oh!

"You Do Forgive Me—You Will Forgive Me, Won't You?"

There was some one in the room. Some one was speaking. She knew the voice. "She must be in soon," it said. It was her Aunt Julia's voice. She stopped dead. And there was silence in the room.

Oh! to be caught like this! In a trap. And just when she had decided to go home! She would not be caught. She would steal up to her room, get her money, leave enough on the table to pay her bill, and *go*. Who could have betrayed her? Only one person knew. Lady St. Crave. Well, Lady St. Crave should not betray her for nothing. She would go back to Paris. That woman should be taught what it costs to play the traitor.

All this in the quite small pause before her aunt's voice spoke again.

"Unless she's got wind of our coming and flown," it said.

"Our" coming? Who was the other?

Betty was eavesdropping then? How dishonorable! Well, it is. And she was.

"I hope to Heaven she's safe," said another voice. *Oh!*—it was her stepfather! He had come! Then he *must* know *everything!* She moved, quite without meaning to move; her knee touched the door and it creaked. Very, very faintly, but it creaked. Would they hear? Had they heard? No—the aunt's voice again:

"The whole thing's inexplicable to me! I don't understand it. You let Betty go to Paris."

"Yes—Heaven knows I wanted her to be happy." The old man's voice was sadder than Betty had ever heard it.

"So we found Madame Gautier for her—and when Madame Gautier dies, she doesn't write to you, or wire to you, to come and find her a new chaperon. Why?"

"I can't imagine why!"

"Don't you think it may have been because she was afraid of you—thought you'd simply make her come back to Long Barton?"

"It would surely have been impossible for her to imagine that I should lessen the time which I had promised her on account of an unfortunate accident. She knows the depth of my affection for her. Do you think it possible that she has been seeing that man again?"

There was a sound as of a chair impatiently pushed back. Betty fled noiselessly to the stairs. No footsteps followed the movement of the chair. She crept back.

"——when you do see her?" her aunt was asking. "I suppose you mean to heap reproaches on her, and take her home in disgrace?"

"I hope I shall have strength given me to do my duty," said the Reverend Cecil.

"Have you considered what your duty is?"

"It must be my duty to reprove, to show her her deceit in its full enormity."

"You'll enjoy that, won't you? It'll gratify your sense of power."

"Because a thing is painful to me it is none the less my duty."

"Nor any the more," snapped Miss Desmond; "nor any the more! That's what you won't see. She knows you don't care about her, and that's why she kept away from you as long as she could."

"She can't know it. It isn't true. Do *you* imagine I don't care for her? Have you been poisoning her mind and——"

He Read the Letter, Re-read It, Raised His Eyebrows

"Oh, don't let's talk about poison!" said Miss Desmond. "If she's lost altogether it won't matter to you."

"If she's lost I—if she were lost I should not care to be saved."

"Of course," said Miss Desmond. "She's not your child—why should you care? You never had a child."

"What have I done to you that you should try to torture me like this?" It was her stepfather's voice, but Betty hardly knew it. "For pity's sake, woman, be quiet!"

"I'm sorry," said Miss Desmond very gently. "Forgive me if I didn't understand. And you do really care about her a little?"

"Care about her a little! She's the only living thing I do care for—or ever have cared for except one. Oh, it is like a woman to cast it up to me as a reproach that I have no child! Why have I no child? Because the woman whom Almighty God made for my child's mother was taken from me—in her youth—before she was mine. Her name was Lizzie. And my Lizzie, my little Lizzie that's lied and deceived us, she *is* my child—the one *we* should have had. She's my heart's blood. Do you think I want to scold her? Do you think I want to humble her? Do you not perceive how my own heart will be torn? But it is my duty. I will not spare the rod. And she will understand as you never could. Oh, my little Lizzie! Oh, pray God she is safe! If it please God to restore her safely to me I will not yield to the wicked promptings of my own selfish affection. I will show her her sin, and we will pray for forgiveness together. Yes, I will not shrink, even if it break my heart—I will tell her——"

"I should tell her," said Miss Desmond, "just what you've told me."

The old man was walking up and down the room. Betty could hear every movement.

"It's been the struggle of my life not to spoil her—not to let my love for her lead me to neglect her eternal welfare—not to lessen her modesty by my praises—not to condone the sin because of my love for the sinner. My love has not been selfish. It has been the struggle of my life not to let my affection be a snare to her."

"Then I must say," said Miss Desmond, "that you might have been better employed."

"Thank God, I have done my duty! You don't understand. But my Lizzie will understand."

"Yes, she will understand," cried Betty, bursting open the door and standing between the two with cheeks that flamed. "I *do* understand, father dear! Auntie, I don't understand *you!* You're cruel—and it's not like you. Will you mind going away, please?"

The cruel aunt smiled and moved toward the door. As she passed Betty she whispered: "I thought you were *never* going to come from behind that door. I couldn't have kept it up much longer."

Then she went out and closed the door firmly.

Betty went straight to her stepfather and put her arms round his neck.

"You do forgive me—you will forgive me, won't you?" she said breathlessly.

He put an arm awkwardly round her.

"There's nothing you could do that I couldn't forgive," he said in a choked voice. "But it is my duty not to ——"

She interrupted him by drawing back to look at him, but she kept his arm where it was, by her hand on his.

"Father," she said, "I've heard everything you've been saying. It's no use scolding me, because you can't possibly say anything that I haven't said to myself a thousand times. Sit down and let me tell you everything, every single thing! I *did* mean to come home this week and tell you; I truly did. I wish I'd gone home before."

"Oh, Lizzie," said the old man, "how could you? How could you?"

"I didn't understand. I didn't know. I was a blind idiot. Oh, father, you'll see how different I'll be now! Oh, if one of us had died—and I'd never known!"

"Known what, my child? Oh, thank God I have you safe! Know what?"

"Why, that you—how fond you are of me."

"You didn't know *that?*"

"I—I wasn't always sure," Betty hastened to say. A miracle had happened. She could read now in his eyes the appeal that she had always misread before. "But now I shall always be sure—always. And I'm going to be such a good daughter to you—you'll see—if you'll only forgive me. And you will forgive me. Oh, you don't know how I trust you now!"

"Didn't you always?"

"Not enough—not nearly enough. But I do now. Let me tell you—don't let me ever be afraid of you—oh, don't let me!" She had pushed him gently into a chair and was half kneeling on the floor beside him. "I ought to be miserable because I've done wrong—but I'm not. I can't be. I'm really most frightfully happy."

"Thank God you can say that," he said, timidly stroking her hair with the hand that she was not holding. "Now I'm not afraid of anything you may have to tell me, my child—my dear child."

. . . . . .

To four persons the next day was one of the oddest in their lives. Arriving early to take Betty to finish her sketch, the stricken Temple was greeted on the doorstep by a manly-looking lady in gold-rimmed spectacles, short skirts, serviceable brown boots and a mushroom hat.

"I know who you are," said she: "you're Mr. Temple. I'm Betty Desmond's aunt. Would you like to take me on the river? Betty is busy this morning making the acquaintance of her stepfather."

"I see," said Temple. "I shall be delighted to take you on the river."

"Nice young man. You don't ask questions. An excellent trait."

"An acquired characteristic, I assure you."

"Then you won't be able to transmit it to your children. That's a pity. However, since you don't ask I'll tell you. The old man has persistently concealed his real nature from Betty. You'd think it was impossible, living in the same house all these years. Last night she found him out. She's as charmed with the discovery as a girl child with a doll that opens and shuts its eyes—or a young man with the nonentity he calls his ideal. Come along."

"I do not need cheering," said the young man. "And I don't want you to tell me things you'd rather not. On the contrary ——"

"You want me not to tell you the things I'd rather tell you?"

"No: I should like to tell you all about——"

"All about yourself. My dear young man, there is nothing I enjoy more; the passion for confidences is my only vice. It was really to indulge that that I asked you to come on the river with me."

"I thought," said Temple as they reached the landing stage, "that perhaps you had asked me to console me for not seeing your niece this morning."

"Thank you kindly." Miss Desmond stepped lightly into the boat. "I rather like compliments, especially when they're solidly built—like myself. I gather that you've been proposing to my niece."

"I didn't mean to," said Temple, pulling a racing stroke in his agitation.

"Gently, gently! The Diamond Sculls aren't at stake. She led you on, you mean?"

"Are you trying to make me angry? It's a dangerous river. Can you swim?"

"Like any porpoise. But of course I misunderstand people if they won't explain themselves. You needn't tremble like that. I'll be gentle with you."

"Well, then," said Temple; and the tale began. By the time it was ended the boat was at a standstill in the little backwater below the prettiest of the sluices.

"Well," said Miss Desmond, dipping her hand in the water—"what a stream this is, to be sure!—Well, your means are satisfactory and you seem to me to have behaved quite beautifully. I don't think I ever heard of such profoundly correct conduct."

"If I've made myself out a prig," said Temple, "I'm sorry. I could tell you lots of things."

"Please spare me! Why are people always so frightfully ashamed of having behaved like decent human beings? I esteem you immensely."

"I'd rather you liked me."

"Well, so I do. But I like lots of people I don't esteem. If I'd married any one it would probably have been some one like that. But for Betty it's different. I shouldn't have needed to esteem my own husband. But I must esteem hers."

"Advise me," said he. "She doesn't care for me at present. What can I do?"

"What most of us have to do—when we want anything worth wanting. Wait. We're going home the day after to-morrow. If you turn up at Long Barton about the middle of September you might come down for the Harvest Festival; it's the yearly excitement. That's what I should do."

"Must I wait so long as that?" he asked. "Why?"

"Let me whisper in your ear," said Miss Desmond, loud above the chatter of the weir. "Long Barton is very dull! Now let's go back."

. . . . . .

"Now *that*," said the Reverend Cecil that evening to his sister-in-law—"that is the kind of youth I should wish to see my Lizzie select for her helpmate."

"Well," said Miss Desmond, "if you keep that wish strictly to yourself, I should think it had a better chance than most wishes of being gratified."

XXVII—THE PINK SILK STORY

TO CALL on the concierge at Betty's old address and to ask for news of her had come to seem to Vernon the unbroken habit of a lifetime. To his deep surprise and increasing disquietude, no answer came.

Watch for the postman. Look at Betty's portrait. Call on the concierge. (He had been used to dislike the employment of dirty instruments.) Call on the florist. (There was a decency in things, even if all one's being were contemptibly parched for the sight of another woman.) Call and inquire for the poor jasmine lady. Studio—think of Betty—look at her portrait—pretend to work. Meals at fairly correct intervals. Call on the concierge. Look at the portrait again. Such were the recurrent incidents of Vernon's life.

Then came the morning when the concierge, demurely assuring him of her devotion to his interests, offered to post a letter. No bribe—and he was shameless in his offers—could wring more than that from her. And even the posting of the letter cost a sum that the woman chuckled over through all the days during which the letter lay in her locked drawer, under Lady St. Craye's banknote and the divers tokens of "*ce monsieur's*" interest in the intrigue—whatever the intrigue might be—its details were not what interested.

Vernon went home, pulled the table into the middle of the bare studio, and wrote. This letter wrote itself without revision.

"Why did you go away?" it said. "Where are you? Where can I see you? What has happened? Have your people found out?

"I want to have no lies or deceit any more between us. I must tell you the truth. I have never been engaged to any one. But you would not let me see you without that, so I let you think it. Will you forgive me? Can you? For lying to you? If you can't I shall know that nothing matters at all. But if you can forgive me—then I shall let myself hope for impossible things.

"Dear, whether it's all to end here or not, let me write this once without thinking of anything but you and me. I have written to your father asking his permission to ask you to marry me. To you I want to say that I love you, love you, love you—and I have never loved any one else. That's part of my punishment for—I don't know what exactly. Playing with fire, I suppose. Dear—can you love me? Ever since I met you at Long Barton" (Pause: What about Miss Van Tromp? Nothing, nothing, nothing) "I've not thought of anything but you. I want you for my very own. There is no one like you, my love, my Princess.

"You'll write to me. Even if you don't care a little bit you'll write. Dear, I hardly dare hope that you care, but I daren't fear that you don't. I shall count the minutes till I get your answer. I feel like a schoolboy.

"Dear, it's my very heart I'm sending you here. If I didn't love you, love you, love you, I could write a better letter, tell you better how I love you. Write now. You will write?

"Did some one tell you something or write you something that made you go away? It's not true, whatever it is. Nothing's true, but that I want you as I've never wanted anything. Let me see you. Let me tell you. I'll explain everything—if any one *has* been telling lies.

"If you don't care enough to write, I don't care enough to go on living. Oh, my dear Dear, all the words and phrases have been used up before! There's nothing new to *say*, I know. But what's in my heart for you—that's new,

that's all that matters—that and what your heart might hold for me. Does it? Tell me. If I can't have your love, I can't bear my life. And I won't. You'll think this letter isn't like me. It isn't, I know. But I can't help it. I am a new man: and you have made me. Dear—can't you love the man you've made? Write, write, write!

"Yours—as I never thought I could be any one's,

"EUSTACE VERNON."

"It's too long," he said, "most inartistic, but I won't rewrite it. Contemptible ass! If she cares it won't matter. If she doesn't it won't matter either."

And that was the letter that lay in the locked drawer for a week. And through that week the watching for the postman went on—went on. And the inquiries, mechanically.

It was on the fifth day that he met Mimi Chantal, the prettiest model on the left bank.

"Is Monsieur by chance painting the great picture which shall put him between Rembrandt and Velasquez and Caran d'Ache on the last day?"

"I am painting nothing," said Vernon.

"Then Monsieur had better begin to paint that *chef-d'œuvre*—to-day even. It isn't often that the prettiest model in Paris is free to sit at a moment's notice."

"But," said Vernon, "I haven't an idea for a picture even."

"There is always something that lacks! I have ideas, me."

"Tell me some of them," said Vernon.

"Here is one! I have the idea that artists have no eyes. How they pose me ever as l'Été or La Source or Leda, or that clumsy Suzanne with her eternal old men! As if they knew better than I do how a woman holds herself up or sits herself down, or nurses a duck, or defends herself!"

"Your idea is probably correct. I understand you to propose that I should paint a picture called The Blind Artist?"

"Don't do the imbecile. I propose for subject Me—not posed; me as I am in the rest. Is it not that it is then that I am the most pretty, the most chic?"

"It certainly is," said he. "And you propose that I should paint you as you appear in the rest?"

"Perfectly," she interrupted. "And if you want a contrast—or one of those little tricks to make people say: 'What does it mean?'——"

"I don't, thank you," he laughed.

"Paint that white-drowned girl's face that hangs behind your stove. Paint her and me looking at each other. She has the air of felicitating herself that she is dead. Me, I will have the air of felicitating myself that I am alive. One might entitle it The Rivals."

"Or The Rest," said Vernon, a little interested. "Oh, well, I'll make a sketch."

. . . . . .

"Auntie, wake up, wake up!" Betty, white-faced and determined, was pulling back the curtain with fingers that rigidly would not tremble.

"Shut the door and spare my blushes," said her aunt. "What's up now? Why, it's only just six."

"I can't help it," said Betty; "you've had all the night to sleep in. I haven't. I want you to get up and dress and come to Paris with me by the early train."

"Sit down," said the aunt. "No, not on the bed. I hate that. In this chair. Now remember that we all parted last night in the best of spirits, and that as far as I know nothing has happened since."

"Oh, no—nothing, of course!" said Betty.

"Don't be ironical," said Miss Desmond; "at six in the morning it's positively immoral. Tell me all—let me hear the sad, sweet story of your life."

"Very well," said Betty, "if you're only going to gibe I'll go alone. Or I'll get Mr. Temple to take me."

"To see the other man? That *will* be nice."

"Who said anything about ——"

"You did, the moment you came in. Come, child; sit down and tell me. I'm not unsympathetic. I'm only very, very sleepy. And I *did* think everything was arranged. I was dreaming of orange blossoms and The Voice that Breathed. And the most beautiful trousseau. And silver fish-knives, and salt-cellars in a case lined with purple velvet."

"It's not a joke," said Betty.

"So I more and more perceive, now that I'm really waking up," said the aunt, sitting up and throwing back her thick, blond hair. "Come, I'll get up now. Give me my stockings—and tell me ——"

"They were under my big hat," said Betty, doing as she was told; "the one I wore the night you came. And I'd thrown it down on the chest of drawers—and they were underneath."

"My stockings?"

"No—my letters. Two of them. And one of them's from Him. It's a week old. And he says he won't live if I don't love him."

"They always do," said Miss Desmond, pouring water into the basin. "Well?"

"And he wants me to marry him, and he was never engaged to Lady St. Craye; and that other woman at Montmartre, that that woman told me about—Lady St. Craye, I mean—it was a lie. I've had a letter from *her*."

"I can't understand a word you say," said Miss Desmond through splashings.

"My friend, Paula, that I told you about. She never went home to her father. Mr. Vernon set her up in a restaurant. Oh, how good and noble he is! Here are your shoes—and he says he won't live without me; and I'm going straight off to him."

"Hand me that green silk petticoat. Thank you. *What* did you think I'd understand?"

On the Farther Arm of the Chair Sat, Laughing Also, a Very Pretty Young Woman

"Why, that I—that it's him I love."

"You do, do you?"

"Yes, always, always! And I must go to him. But I won't go and leave Bobbie to think I'm going to marry him some day. I must tell him first."

"You must do as you like. It's your life, not mine. But it's a pity," said her aunt, "and I should send a telegram to prepare him."

"The office won't be open. There's a train at seven forty-five."

It was not the 7:45 that was caught, however, but the 10:15, because Temple was, naturally, in bed. When he had been roused, and had dressed and come out to them, Miss Desmond turned and positively fled before the gay radiance of his face.

"This is dear and sweet of you," he said to Betty.

"Oh, don't," said Betty; "don't look like that! I couldn't go without telling you. It's all over, Bobbie."

She had never before called him by that name, and now she did not know what she had called him.

"What's all over?" he asked mechanically.

"Everything," she said; "your thinking I was going to, perhaps, sometime—and all that. Because now I never shall. Oh, Bobbie, I do hate hurting you, and I do like you so frightfully much! But he's written to me: the letter's been delayed. And it's all a mistake. And I'm going to him now. Oh—I hope you'll be able to forgive me!"

"It's not your fault," he said. "Wait a minute. It's so sudden. May I know who it is?"

"It's Mr. Vernon," said Betty.

Temple's hand clenched. "No, no, no, no!" he cried.

"I am so very, very sorry," said Betty in the tone one uses who has trodden on another's foot in an omnibus.

"But it's not true!" he said. "It can't be true! He's going to marry Lady St. Craye."

"That's all a mistake," said Betty eagerly; "he only said that because—I haven't time to tell you all about it now. But it was all a mistake."

"Betty, dear," he said, using in his turn, for the first time, her Christian name, "don't do it. Don't marry him. You don't know."

"I thought you were his friend."

"So I am," said Temple. "I like him right enough. But what's all the friendship in the world compared with your happiness? Don't marry him—dear. Don't."

"I shall marry whom I choose," said Betty, chin in air, "and it won't be you." ("I don't care if I am vulgar and brutal," she told herself; "it serves him right.")

"It's not for me, dear. It's not for me—it's for you. I'll go right away and never see you again. Marry some straight chap—any one—but not Vernon."

"I am going to marry Mr. Vernon," said Betty with lofty calm, "and I am very sorry for any annoyance I may have caused you. Of course, I see now that I could never—I mean," she added angrily, "I hate people who are false to their friends. Yes—and now I've missed my train."

She had.

"Forgive me," said Temple when the fact was substantiated and the gray pony put up; "after all, I was your friend before I—before you—before all this that can't come to anything. Let me give you both some coffee and see you to the station. And Betty, don't you go and be sorry about me afterward. Because, really, it's not your fault, and," he laughed and was silent a moment—"and I'd rather have loved you and have it end like this, dear, than never have known you. I truly would."

The journey to Paris was interminable. Betty had decided not to think of Temple, yet that happy morning face of his would come between her and the things she wanted to think of. To have hurt him like that! It hurt her horribly; much more than she would have believed possible. And she had been cruel! "Of course it's natural that he should say things about him. He must hate any one that—— He nearly cried when he said that about rather have loved me than not—yes——" A lump came in Betty's own throat, and her eyes pricked.

"Come, don't cry," said her aunt briskly; "you've made your choice."

Vernon's concierge assured these ladies that Monsieur was at home.

"He makes the painting in this moment," she said. "Mount, then, my ladies."

They mounted.

Betty remembered her last—her first—visit to his studio. She remembered how the velvet had come off her dress, and how awful her hair had been when she had looked in the glass afterward. And Lady St. Craye—how beautifully dressed, how smiling and superior!

"Hateful cat!" said Betty on the stairs.

"Eh?" said her aunt.

Now there would be no one in the studio but Vernon. He would be reading over her letters.

The key was in the door.

"Do you mind waiting on the stairs, auntie, dear," said Betty in a voice of honey; "just the first minute? I would like to have it for us two—alone. You don't mind?"

"Do as you like," said the aunt rather sadly. "I should knock if I were you."

Betty did not knock. She opened the studio door softly. She would like to see him before he saw her.

She had her wish.

(Continued on Page 16)

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

FOUNDED A: D: 1728

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY BY

THE CURTIS PUBLISHING COMPANY

421 TO 427 ARCH STREET

GEORGE HORACE LORIMER, EDITOR

PHILADELPHIA, APRIL 28, 1906

Single Subscriptions, $2.00 the Year. In Clubs, $1.25 Each
Five Cents the Copy of All Newsdealers

Foreign Subscriptions: For Countries in the Postal Union
Single Subscriptions, $3.25. In Clubs, $2.50 Each
Remittances to be Made by International Postal Money Order

Poor Richard Junior's Philosophy

¶ Pretty low—High finance.

¶ Now turned around spells victory.

¶ The only sure things are those that have already happened.

¶ People who are afraid of freckles never make hay while the sun shines.

¶ There are men who seem to think it is better to be well-heeled than whole-souled.

¶ The pessimist stands beneath the tree of prosperity and growls when the fruit falls on his head.

¶ The clerk who has to get out of a warm bed on a cold winter morning is thoroughly imbued with the idea that the office should seek the man.

The Biter Stung

THAT able citizen and captain of industry, the late Charles T. Yerkes, sold certain gentlemen of Chicago and New York a very large gold brick known as the Union Traction Company of Chicago. He then departed for London, and when the purchasers of the gold brick had got off the elaborate tin-foil wrappings he was busily engaged in "developing the resources" of the English metropolis. When his attention was called to the quality of the brick, he made remarks about the woeful mismanagement of his old properties that did not reflect pleasantly upon the capacity of the present owners of the brick. However that may be, Mr. Yerkes died and left what plunder he had got during thirty very active years to hospitals, art museums, and other good things.

It seems that about half of this plunder consists of bonds of one of the underlying properties in the same Union Traction, which corporation has quite effectually been put out of business by the recent decision of the Supreme Court. What those bonds are worth in the light of that decision not even Yerkes himself could tell—probably not much. That gentleman, however, has gone where he doesn't need them. Meantime, it is hard on the hospitals and art museums. But it must be consoling to the holders of the gold brick.

Mr. Jerome on the Brink

TAMMANY HALL must have found District Attorney Jerome's Delta Upsilon speech very soothing. One can imagine it speculating hopefully as to just how many yards more of the same kind of rope will be necessary to complete the suicide.

The life-insurance disclosures evoked a profound sense of outrage. Nothing could overcome the simple fact that, if a little thief—say one of McCall's or McCurdy's clerks—took money which was intrusted to him and gave it to his political friends, he would be sent to prison. Naturally the people looked to the District Attorney to punish the men who had so grossly betrayed their trusts—as a small and poor offender similarly guilty would be punished. Mr. Jerome's attitude, during his own campaign, was that we must wait for all the evidence, we must proceed cautiously, we must not be stampeded. This was accepted. Nobody raised the unfair parallel that a determination not to be stampeded is always the refuge of a public servant bent upon avoiding his duty. The evidence is now in. Mr. Jerome declares that it does not warrant indictments. To the lay mind his reasoning is very far from conclusive. So eminent a legal authority as Judge Parker has asserted that it is sufficient to indict and convict. Judge O'Sullivan's instructions to the grand jury leave no doubt as to his opinion that the District Attorney should present the cases for indictment. Other men of good legal attainments have taken issue with the District Attorney's construction of the law.

Considering the public's deep feeling of outrage, could Mr. Jerome, on a sober second thought, imagine a situation which was more certain to provoke criticism? But when the criticism comes he spouts intemperate language and pictures the country in a fit of hysterics. When a public servant gets in that frame of mind where he regards disapproval of himself as a sign of hysteria he is paying out the suicidal rope. We hope Mr. Jerome will think better of it.

When the Yellow Dog Barks

BOURBONISM is a curious, but pretty constant, trait of the human mind. It consists, finally, in an impregnable faith that the heavens and earth were created in order that a certain condition, which we personally find agreeable, might flourish. Life insurance is liberally flavored with it. Trustees under whose régime all the rottenness that we now know about was practiced not only continue to hold their offices, but calmly appear before a legislative committee to argue against bills designed to protect policyholders. Moreover, they use the agency force of the company and the policyholders' money to get proxies to reëlect themselves. Merely to state the fact ought to overwhelm it with ridicule. Such a trustee should say to the Legislature: "I appear before you as the representative of a body of policyholders whom I have betrayed to the grafters for a long time, and although your first care ought to be to protect them from me, nevertheless in their name I urge"—and so on. He should say to the policyholder: "If you want to know what I have done for you in the past, read the Armstrong report; still, I think it right to charge you up with the expense of seeking proxies for my reëlection." Of course he doesn't say anything of the kind, because, as a matter of fact, no such disturbing ideas enter his steadfast mind. He is quite confident that, in the terms of to-day, he is the State—being duly anointed with respectability. To ask what good his respectability did the looted policyholders would, apparently, be as much beside the question as to inquire what benefit Louis' impoverished subjects derived from his celestial title.

Mr. Andrew Hamilton, not repudiating the appellation of "yellow dog" for himself, retorts with the epithet of "curs" for the trustees, who have since turned upon him, and argues for the superior virtues of his own breed. We think this canine difference, if there is a difference, might fittingly be compounded—in the same sausage mill.

"Nothing to Conceal"

PUBLICITY of accounts is a favorite remedy for corporation ills. The President has always been strong in its advocacy. The strict limitations of its usefulness, however, are well illustrated by the recently published annual report of the United States Steel Corporation. At the beginning, the Steel Trust took advanced ground in this respect. Its annual reports are much the fullest and most explicit of any big industrial. Each one fills a rather bulky pamphlet, setting forth, with all reasonable particularity, every item of property owned by the corporation and the results of its operations. Yet who but an expert, studying these elaborate statistics, could possibly derive any valuable information from them? The only statement in it that the ordinary small investor can understand is that of net earnings, and he already knows from the price of his stock, which is shaped by people with "inside" knowledge, whether those earnings were increasing or decreasing. This is not at all the fault of the report. It is because it deals in terms and gives the results of operations of which the non-expert public is ignorant. As a basis for determining the value of stock, the common man might as well take a page of Greek tragedy. Railroad reports are essentially different, because they describe a much simpler function, deal in terms that are quite generally understood, and there is a broad basis for comparisons. Any one who can derive really valuable information from an "industrial's" report need not bother about small investments. He can get a handsome salary.

A May-Day Topic

IN THE spring strikes occur. Formerly it was supposed that social science would discover a way to prevent or avoid them. Nobody supposes that now. It is understood that they are a result of natural law, a spontaneous and irresistible response to the genial quickening of the earth and the starting of the sap. The trees put forth young leaves, the bushes sprout, and there are street riots in Chicago and other places.

This is not a consideration of the labor question. There is no use in considering that, for nothing can be done about it. It is merely a contemplation of one of its phases, as a man gazes at the tide, feels the rain, or opens his senses to the fact of any other of the immutable conditions of his life. No doubt there will always be the employer who insists passionately that the unions must be completely extirpated—preferably by Gatling guns, although muskets will be accepted—and the employee who stands firmly upon his right to beat up whoever gets in the way of his strike.

The public generally accepts the inevitableness of this, as its attitude shows. It is, however, exceedingly inconvenient to that eighty or ninety per cent. of the public that has nothing directly to do with either side of the case, but which does eighty or ninety per cent. of the suffering. It does seem that, accepting the strike as a fixed condition, something might be done to make it less painful to the great non-combatant mass. To that worthy end it is suggested that every large industrial centre should provide itself with a sort of Indian reservation, twenty miles or so beyond the corporate limits, where the combatants could be segregated and fight the thing out without ruining the business and jeopardizing the limbs of the non-combatants. The plan should, of course, include spectators' benches where the inevitable innocent bystander could do his bystanding and get his head broken in comfort.

Deep-Rooted Graft

NOT long ago some good Ohio bankers were called upon to explain why they had been paying graft to a custodian of public funds. They explained it promptly and lucidly. If these public funds were locked up in the treasury and withdrawn from business the local supply of circulating medium would thereby be curtailed, interest rates would rise, an injurious stringency might result. To prevent this they induced the treasurer to deposit the money in the banks, which put it in circulation. The use of the money was worth something to the banks—so they paid the treasurer for its use! This explanation would have been entirely satisfactory if the money had belonged to the treasurer personally, instead of to the public. Arrangements of this kind are very common, and both bankers and treasurers hate to admit the plain fact that there is no moral difference between pocketing the interest on public money and pocketing the principal. The incident is worth mentioning just now as a little illustration of the prevalence and tenacity of graft.

In spite of the great shaking-up that has come with the life-insurance exposures, the very biggest and worst graft in American business life not only flourishes unchecked, but it is still taken actually as a matter of course, as something that not only will be but really ought to be. This graft is the dealing in stock of a corporation by the directors and officers. If the directors are bringing out plans that will improve the position of the company, they go into the market and buy its stock—buying it from other holders who elected them, whose trustees they are, but who do not know of the improvement that is on the way. This is so common that it is almost universal. Very often, if something bad is coming, the forewarned directors sell. In either case they are simply grafting—using their position as trustees for their own interests and against the interests of those for whom they hold the trust. Nobody says anything about it, and the opinion of high finance approves it. The truth is that being honest, when it means missing a profit and there is no penitentiary sentence attached, is an acquired taste with these fellows.

Some Race Problems

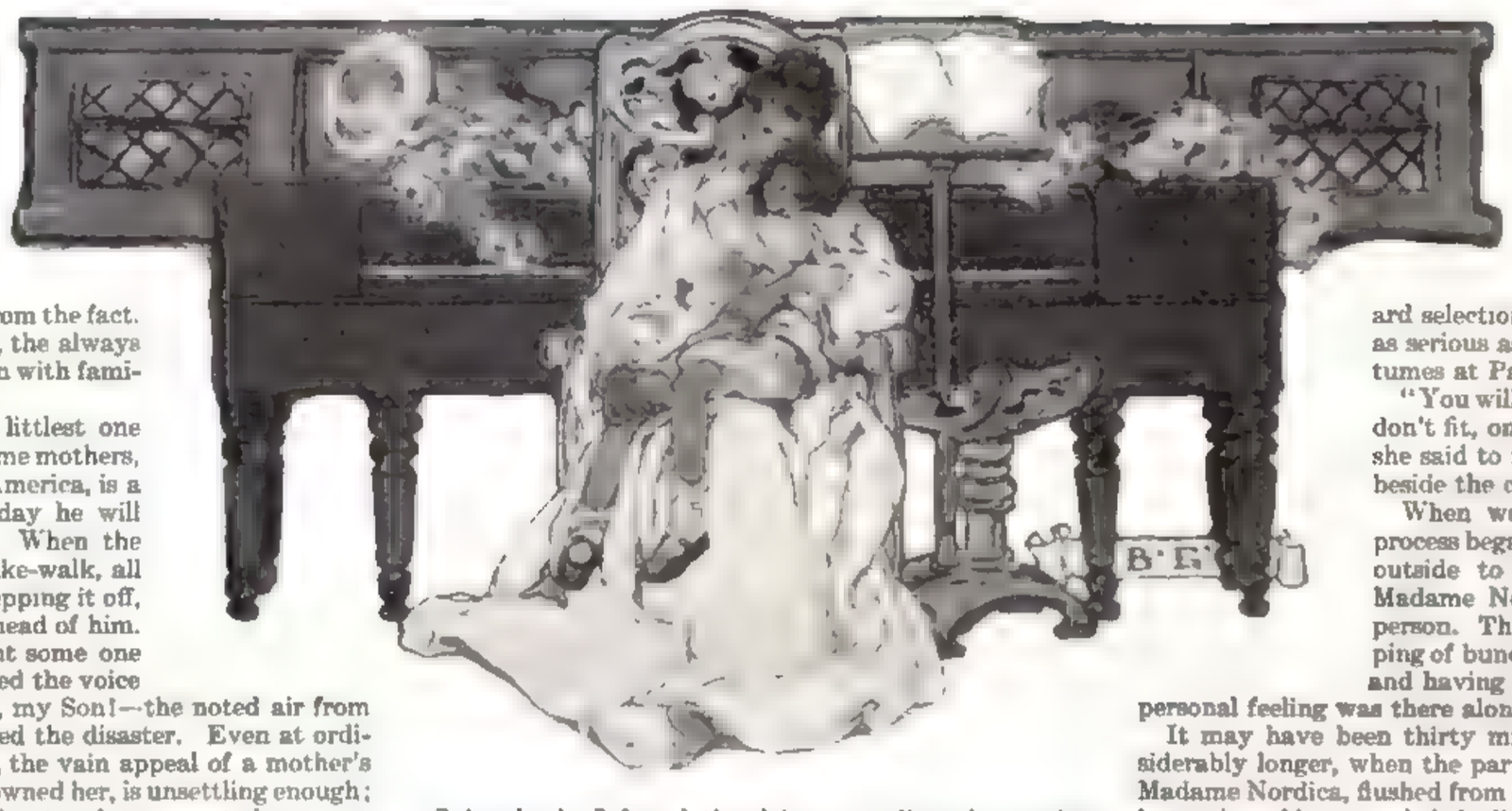
FATE has played a mean trick on General J. Warren Keifer. The General, as a member of Congress from the Springfield, Ohio, district, is author of a bill which proposes to cut down the representation in Congress of those Southern States which have disfranchised most of their negro citizens. The proposal is: either let the negro vote, as the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution intended that he should, or cease sending men to the House of Representatives and electoral college whose title to sit in those bodies is based on negro population. As a means to help the blacks or to punish their oppressors, the measure was sure of a considerable sympathy in the North. But just as the General was in the midst of his campaign for it, an important number of his own constituents, in his own home city, set about enthusiastically to mob the black population, drive them out of town, burn their dwellings, and, in general, create a condition of existence for negro citizens which would make mere disfranchisement look like a just and joyous state.

This is the trouble with race prejudice. As a condition existing far away from home it could be discussed and disposed of with enlightened certainty. But about two times out of three, when there are enough men of a different color on anything like a competitive footing, it comes home. Then it is more complicated.

OFF THEIR PEDESTALS

Genius in Its Easy Slippers

By WILLIAM ARMSTRONG



IT WAS a talking-machine that almost broke the heart of little George Washington Schumann, the youngest of her three children that Madame Schumann-Heink has at her home in Ludlow, near Yonkers. That afternoon the machine had arrived, and the singer, who was sailing next morning to fill her present engagements abroad, was trying to divert three young minds from the fact. It is one of those penalties, the always saying good-by, that women with families pay for their greatness.

George Washington, the littlest one of the lot of nine that Madame mothers, and the only one born in America, is a natural comedian; some day he will make a career of his own. When the new machine played a cake-walk, all went well; while he was stepping it off, to-morrow seemed a year ahead of him. But in a misguided moment some one put in a disk that reproduced the voice of his mother. It was Ah, my Son!—the noted air from The Prophet—that provoked the disaster. Even at ordinary times its sad reproach, the vain appeal of a mother's love to the son who has disowned her, is unsettling enough; but when your mother is about to leave you to bear your burden of six years alone, it is not short of heart-breaking.

George Washington sat down on a chair, crossed his legs with the air of a man, and, like a man, tried to bear it.

But the rich contralto voice that continued to appeal, "Ah, my son! Ah, my son!" was too much for him. He sat up very straight, but as near to his mother as he could get without giving way to the weakness of resting his head on her shoulder, and looked straight ahead of him.

The disk kept on revolving, and the air drew out its lugubrious length. Presently a tear stole down George's little flushed cheek, and others soon followed it. A choked sob in his throat caught the quick ear of the mother. As she turned he threw himself on her breast—all the bedtimes when she would not be there to pat his head and tuck him in swept over him in that instant. The two other children crept closer to her. Madame Schumann-Heink's face had grown very white; its muscles were set.

"I must go," I said, "or I shall be worse than George Washington."

"Don't say good-by," she whispered. She knew that things were bad enough as it was, without any leave-taking to heighten them.

As I crept by the music-room door into the night I heard the strains of a cake-walk inviting the legs of George Washington, but those legs hung limp and dejected across the lap of his mother. The moment was one of those for which the singer paid a price that, perhaps, finds no compensation in art.

Grieg's Hospitality

EDVARD GRIEG, the great composer, lives a long way over the mountains from Bergen in Norway, the country that he loves too well to leave. Three times the driver lost his way in getting me there, and on the worst part of the road a Berlin artist-friend, whose easel was set up near the highway, had said: "It is only eleven o'clock; you had better turn back: Grieg never receives any one until four in the afternoon."

"But I am not supposed to know that," I answered. "My time is short, and after this much of a jolt I shall keep on until I find him."

At last we got to the place, shining white between the silver-green of the birches. The carriage was wrecked, for a bolt had been lost in the last stony struggle, and until it could be fixed we were stranded.

"Mr. Grieg is not in; he has walked down toward Bergen," was the greeting we got from the maid, who added that he would go again the next morning, and the one following; she did not know his objective point now or in the future.

That Grieg was not equal to walking to Bergen I very well knew. The artist's advice had evidently been good. She took a line from me for the composer, regretting that I had come all the way from New York only to miss him.

Going back, I found the driver mending the carriage with a piece of wire that Grieg's cook had given him. While he went on with his work I viewed the place: the spring violets, the silvery birches and the sombre pine trees, a lake showing white between them—the Norway that Grieg puts into his music.

As I turned toward the half patched-up vehicle, a little man, with piercing, dark eyes, flowing white hair and gnomelike figure, dressed all in gray, with a gray, broad-brimmed hat, came out from under the trees, holding my card in his hand. It was Grieg.

"Don't you know," he began irritably—"Don't you know that I never see any one in the morning? How could I work if I did? Didn't your driver see the sign on my gate-post?"

"He saw nothing, not even the road," I answered. "Look at the carriage!" The driver, bright purple in the face, was still struggling with it.

"Norway doesn't seem to welcome me, does it?"

"It does," he said, taking my hand, his face suddenly breaking into a smile. "Come in." And I spent one of the most interesting hours in my life.

As we talked over the matter that had brought me to him, I learned, to my shame, that forty editions of his music had been pirated in America, lack of international copyright—an injustice lately corrected—having made others rich, only to leave him a poor man. But he gave no thought to that or the injury done him when he said: "Come in." He remembered only the strong appreciation that American music-lovers had given him, and was unwilling to have any countrymen of theirs lack a welcome in Norway.

Madame Nordica's Way

MADAME NORDICA had invited me to spend a day at her country-place. We had explored the grounds; she had been photographed; she had swept the fallen leaves from under the rose-bushes, and a lot of the yellow ones from under the trees—for it was late autumn—when she decided to do some shopping: if there are more strenuous Americans than she they have, up to date, remained in the background.

The big automobile rolled us down the avenue, and presently through the hilly streets of the town. There are more exhilarating things in the life of a man than shopping excursions, but when I had met Madame Nordica by chance in Paris, or London, or Switzerland, and she had allowed me to attend her on such expeditions, the experiences had always proved varied enough to be set down as exceptions.

"There are six of them," she said this time, as we stopped in front of piles of little girls' dresses in the biggest shop in the place. "They're the gardener's."

I recalled a sight of them that morning, standing all in a row, and so briefly apart from each other in birthdays that, viewed from the tallest end of the line, they tapered off like a lesson in perspective.

"The colors must not be too bright," she went on, ransacking the stacks of frocks, and eying them critically, one at a time. "A child likes new clothes, but not of the kind that need a spot or two to make them feel comfortable; and one mustn't have more trimming on than the other."

So the shopping went on, slowly and carefully; no haphazard selections for her. It was almost as serious as getting her own new costumes at Paquin's or Worth's.

"You will bring back the things that don't fit, on your way to the station," she said to me, as two bundles went in beside the chauffeur.

When we got back the trying-on process began at the cottage; I was left outside to wait on the grass while Madame Nordica superintended it in person. There was no indifferent dropping of bundles on doorsteps, no paying and having it done with; her genuine, personal feeling was there along with the impulse.

It may have been thirty minutes, but it seemed considerably longer, when the party emerged from seclusion. Madame Nordica, flushed from much hooking of hooks and buttoning of buttons, led the littlest girl by the hand. As they lined up in a row, twelve radiant eyes rested alternately on her and the dresses; it meant just as much to their joyful hearts that she cared how they looked, as did this magical gift of new frocks as fine as any tulips of their father's own planting.

In the haste of excitement some of the new dresses had been put on over old ones.

"Look; everything fits!" said Madame Nordica, pointing in triumph. "You needn't take a thing back on your way to the station."

Love and Celebrity

TO THE disagreeable pessimist, who maintains that the public career of a woman disturbs her home happiness, the example of Madame Marchesi's fifty-four years of married life may always be quoted as a brilliant denial More than that, after fifty-one years of successful prima-donna making, she is as optimistic as if she had never met one.

Her husband, the Marquis de Castrone, told her once while I was calling that he had a new Panama hat. "Let me see it," was her rejoinder. "You look like a brigand," she said, with pretended severity, when he smilingly put the hat on his head. And then, when his back was turned, she exclaimed:

"Isn't Salvatore beautiful?—but it would never do to tell him."

The whole scene, her manner toward him, and the aside were done with a comedy charm that made one well understand why the handsome old man had remained for over fifty years a lover.

"And when did you get to Paris?" she asked one afternoon, as we sat in her salon together, the portraits of Melba, Calvé, Eames, and a cluster of her other famous pupils looking down from the walls, bearing evidence to her life-work.

"Yesterday," I answered.

"And you came to see me to-day?"

"Yes, because I love you."

"But you have never made me a declaration," she returned, her eyes twinkling.

"I'll do it now," said I, and down on my knees I went before her.

"Salvatore! Salvatore!" she called to her husband. "I am having a proposal!"

In he came, smiling.

"Ah, my dear," he said to her, "it is your intellect that he is in love with. I only wish there was more of that beautiful feeling in the world." And the fine old man looked at her with the eyes of a lover of twenty-one birthdays.

He saw her, after more than half a century, in a light that made the situation to him one more of earnest than of filial jest.

Try It On Your Own Coat

IS THE Coat *you* are wearing *today* "faked" into shape by the Hot Flat-Iron?

The odds are about 4 to 1 that it is; because about 80 per cent of clothes are treated by wily old "Dr. Goose", the Flat-Iron.

Prove it to your own satisfaction and see if you can detect the most common *deceit* used in clothes-making

Lay the Coat flat on a table, as shown in the picture below:—

If the Collar has been given its shape by the Hot Flat Iron you will note that it is *round* and curved, along the *outer edge* and where it *turns over*

If you find it this way, it is a pretty good indication that it was "faked" into shape

If the Coat has been tailored *sincerely*,—honestly—the line of the collar and the turn-over edge will be perfectly *straight*, as indicated in the picture

Now, here is the reason:—

Most garments coming from the hands of the tailor have some errors or faults which *must* be corrected before the garment can be sold.

The Sincerity way is to *take out* such faulty sewing and revise the garment by careful Hand Needle-Work. That makes the correction permanent and the garment *right*

And it's the way all SINCERITY CLOTHES are made

The other method is to use the Hot Flat Iron

In other words, the well-known effect of heat and moisture on fabrics, as applied by Dr. Goose, is used to give the Coat shape *only* until it is sold.

* * * * *

The man who buys it wears it on a damp day, and the Flat-Iron work *wilts out* and leaves the garment as it was *before* being "doped."

—That accounts for the collars that bulge out around the neck

—Lapels that stand away from the neck

—Coat fronts that wrinkle out of shape and cause the coat to lose shape and style.

* * * * *

The great reason why this "faking" is done, is—because *it costs more* to make clothes *sincerely*.

SINCERITY CLOTHES are *not* "faked" by the Hot Flat Iron.

When defects are found in SINCERITY CLOTHES they are corrected by the Shears and Careful *Hand Needle-Work*. That is the secret of their *Sincerity*, and the reason why they retain their shape until thread-bare.

The Flat-Iron will often restore a Coat to its original shape, but the garment cannot *retain* that shape, unless it is given *permanence* by Hand Needle-Work.

* * * * *

It's worth while to know these things and how you can avoid them in the future

The best clothes-insurance you can get is to have the right label in the next Suit or Overcoat that you buy.

If you value Style-Retention and Shape-Insurance, let your next purchase be one bearing the label of the SINCERITY CLOTHIERS

It reads as follows:—

"SINCERITY CLOTHES"

MADE AND GUARANTEED BY

KUH, NATHAN AND FISCHER CO.

CHICAGO

The Incomplete Amorist

(Continued from Page 15)

A big canvas stood on the easel, a stool in front of it. The table was in the middle of the room, a yellow embroidered cloth on it. There was food on the cloth—little breads, pretty cakes and strawberries and cherries, and wine in tall, topaz-colored glasses.

Vernon sat in his big chair. Betty could see his profile. He sat there, laughing. On the farther arm of the chair sat, laughing also, a very pretty young woman. Her black hair was piled high on her head and fastened with a jeweled pin. The sunlight played in the jewels. She wore a pink silk garment. She held cherries in her hand.

"*V'là, cheri!*" she said, and put one of the twin cherries in her mouth; then she leaned over him laughing, and Vernon reached his head forward to take in his mouth the second cherry that dangled below her chin.

Betty banged the door.

"Come away!" she said to Miss Desmond. And she, who had seen, too, the pink picture, came away, holding Betty's arm tight.

"I wonder," she said as they reached the bottom of the staircase—"I wonder he didn't come after us to—to—try to explain."

"I locked the door," said Betty. "Don't speak to me, please."

They were in the train before either broke silence. Betty's face was white and she looked old—thirty almost, her aunt thought.

It was Miss Desmond who spoke.

"Betty," she said, "I know how you feel. But you're very young. I think I ought to say that that girl ——"

"*Don't!*" said Betty.

"I mean what we saw doesn't necessarily mean that he doesn't love you."

"Perhaps not," said Betty, fierce as a white flame. "Anyhow, it means that *I* don't love *him*."

Miss Desmond's tact, worn by three days of anxiety and agitation, broke suddenly, and she said what she regretted for some months:

"Oh, you don't love *him* now? Well, the other man will console you."

"I hate you," said Betty, "and I hate him; and I hope I shall never see a man again as long as I live!"

XXVIII—"AND SO——"

THE banging of his door, the locking of it, annoyed Vernon, yet interested him but little. One's acquaintances have such queer notions of humor. He had the excuse—and by good luck the rope—to explore his celebrated roofs. Mimi was more agitated than he, so he dismissed her for the day with many compliments and a bunch of roses, and spent what was left of the light in painting in a background to the sketch of Betty—the warren as his sketch-book helped him to remember it. Perhaps he and she would go there together some day.

The next morning brought him a letter. He kissed it before he opened it.

"At last," he said. "Oh, this minute was worth waiting for!"

He opened the envelope with a smile of triumph and something better than triumph—and read:

Dear Mr. Vernon:

I hope that nothing in my manner has led you to expect any other answer than the one I must give. That answer is, of course, *no*. Although thanking you sincerely for your flattering offer, I am obliged to say that I have never thought of you except as a friend. I was extremely surprised by your letter. I hope I have not been in any way to blame. With every wish for your happiness, and regrets that this should have happened,

I am, yours faithfully,

ELIZABETH DESMOND.

He read the letter, re-read it, raised his eyebrows. Then he took two turns across the studio, shrugged his shoulders impatiently, lit a match and watched the letter burn.

Next day he went to Spain. A bunch of roses bigger and redder than any roses he had ever sent her came to Lady St. Craye with his card.

She, too, shrugged her shoulders, bit her lip and—arranged the roses in water.

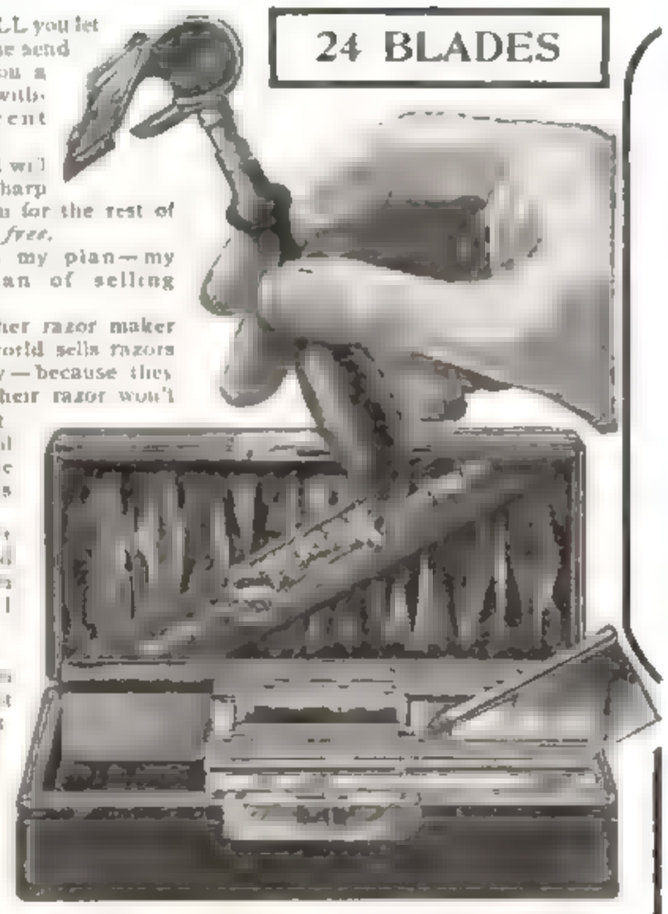
It was May again when Vernon found himself once more sitting at one of the little tables in front of the Café de la Paix.

This Razor must Pay for Itself before You Pay me a Penny

—and a Postal gets It. I Guarantee to Keep your Blades Sharp Forever Without Charge.

I am the man you hold personally responsible for every promise made in this advertisement

P. C. SHERMAN.



WILL you let me send you a razor—without a cent deposit?

Then I will keep it sharp and keen for the rest of your life *free*.

That's my plan—my new plan of selling razors

No other razor maker in the world sells razors this way—because they can't—their razor won't stand it

Mine will—it's the way it's made

Just send me the price of the razor, and if you have tried it [illegible] I'll send you your money back—Not me

[illegible] money back proposition—you may feel that there is some [illegible] getting your money [illegible]

I want [illegible] razor—not [illegible]

For if the razor don't do all I say, you send it back at my expense and you're out nothing, for you've paid me nothing and [illegible]

Now [illegible] Send me your name, occupation, home and business address—and in any manner [illegible] or agreeable, introduce [illegible]

I'll take all the risk and send, prepaid, a Sterling Safety Razor with 24 blades, or a Sterling Old Style Interchangeable Razor with 12 blades.

When you have tested it 7 days, if you find it the finest and easiest shaving razor you ever used, keep it

Then the razor must pay for itself—*that's* my new plan

You see the average man should be shaved at least three times a week—at 15c. a shave that's 45c. a week for shaving

So, if you decide to keep the razor all I ask you to pay me is what you'd pay the barber—45c. a week for a few weeks until the razor is paid for.

That way I make the barber buy you the razor.

At that, my razor does not take any more money to pay for itself than you would have to pay out of your own pocket for an ordinary razor

And I go even farther

I see to it that your blades are kept sharp forever—free.

With any other razor you are always paying out money because you must keep on paying for new blades or resharpening as long as you [illegible]

But with the Sterling—

You can send me 12 dull blades at any time, with 10 cents to cover postage, and I return them to you perfectly sharp—free of charge.

That's all—no honing and no stropping

Did you ever hear of anything as clever as this in the razor line?

It's this way—the reason I can make this offer is because I'm not in the least doubtful or afraid of my razor

My STERLING blades are made of the finest razor steel that money can buy—costs me twice as much as the steel used in any other razor blades

And mine is the only razor on the market that is made of genuine Sheffield steel—that is not a cold rolled steel.

With my careful, systematic process, each STERLING blade is hardened, tempered, ground and honed in oil all by hand, then hand stropped—so that my razor *must* hold its edge

And each of my STERLING blades must pass the SHERMAN test, the most rigid test to which a razor blade can be subjected

No other razor blade could pass this test.

But I *must* make certain that the temper and cutting edge of every STERLING blade are perfect and lasting.

I cannot afford to pass any but faultless razor blades, because my razor is made to shave with, and not made to sell.

And because of all this I can afford—and am glad—to send you the razor, prepaid, for free trial without any deposit but your name, address and the introduction. If you forget the introduction I'll have to write for it and that will delay the razor

You can buy the Sterling Razor for **$5.00**, but I am willing to send it to you and let it pay for itself

Now—write me to-day, stating whether you wish the Safety or Old Style Interchangeable, and let me send you the razor. State whether you wish to cut close or medium, and whether your beard is wiry or fine. Don't send me any money—only a postal.

Remember the razor is yours for a week free—then either keep it and let it pay for itself with the guarantee that I must keep the blades sharp forever—free—or return it to

P. C. SHERMAN, Pres., 308 Water St., N. Y.

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Our Catalogue of Spring and Summer Wear, lists over 20,000 articles for the young. Copy mailed on receipt of **4 cents** for postage.

Infants' Nainsook Short Dress, prettily tucked; neck and sleeves trimmed with embroidered ribbon beading and lace edge; sizes, 6 mos., 1 and 2 yrs. . . . . ***Price $1.75***

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Write for them to-day, you will get them by return mail

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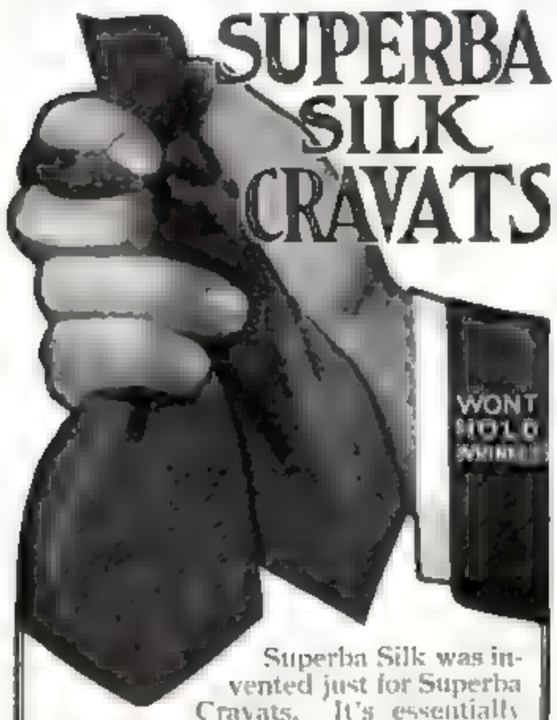

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Makes Boys & Girls Healthy.

Recommended by physicians.

Strengthens the spine, back and shoulders. Improves eyesight. Where receives attention and makes weak legs strong. Trains from 2 years to 15 years. Safe for girls to ride. Can't upset. Patent applied for. ASK YOUR DEALER. WRITE FOR CATALOGUE NOW.

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"Sit here long enough," he said, "and you see every one you have ever known or ever wanted to know. Last year it was the jasmine lady—and that girl—on the same one and wonderful day. This year it's—by Jove!"

He rose and moved among the closely-set chairs and tables to the pavement. A gentlemanly-looking lady in short skirts stood awaiting him.

"How are you?" she said. "Yes, I know you didn't see me, but I thought you'd like to."

"I do like to, indeed. May I walk with you—or ——" he glanced back at the table where his vermouth stood untasted.

"The impertinence of it! Frightfully improper to sit outside cafés! Yes, I'll join you with the greatest pleasure. Coffee, please."

"It's ages since I saw you," he said amiably, "not since ——"

"Since I called on you at your hotel. How frightened you were!"

"Not for long," he answered, looking at her with the eyes she loved, the eyes of some one who was not Vernon. "Ah, me, a lot of water has run since we had that good talk. You remember, I wanted to call on you in London and you wouldn't let me. You might let me now."

"I will," she said. "Ninety-seven, Curzon Street. Your eyes haven't changed color a bit. Nor your nature, I suppose. Yet something about you's changed. Got over Betty yet?"

"Quite, thanks," he said tranquilly. "But last time we met, you remember, we agreed that I had no intentions."

"Wrong lead," she said, smiling frankly at him; "and besides, I hold all the trumps. Ace, king, queen; and ace, knave and queen of another suit."

"Expound, I implore."

"Aces equal general definite and decisive information. King and queen of hearts equal Betty and the other man."

"There was another man, then?"

"There always is, isn't there? Knave—your honored self. Queen—where is the queen, by the way—the beautiful queen with the sad eyes, blind, quite blind to everything but the abominable knave?"

"Meaning me?"

"It's not an unbecoming cap," she said, stirring her coffee, "and you wear it with an air. Where's the queen of your suit?"

"I confess I'm at fault."

"The odd trick is mine. And the honors. You may as well throw down your hand. Yes. I play whist. Not bridge. Where is your queen Lady St.—what is it?"

"I haven't seen her," he said steadily, "since last June. I left Paris on a sudden impulse, and I hadn't time to say good-by to her."

"Remember the date?"

"No," he said, remembering perfectly.

"Not the eleventh, was it? That was the day when you would get Betty's letter of rejection."

"It may have been the eleventh—in fact it *was*."

"Ah, that's better! And the tenth—who let you out of your studio on the tenth? I've often wondered."

"*I've* often wondered who locked me in. It couldn't have been you, of course."

"As you say. But I was there."

"It wasn't ——?"

"But it was. I thought you'd guess that. She got your letter and came up ready to fall into your arms—opened the door softly like any heroine of fiction—I told her to knock—but no: beheld the pink silk picture and fled the happy shore forever."

"Damn!" he said. "I do beg your pardon, but really ——"

"Don't waste those really convincing damns on ancient history. I told her it didn't mean that you didn't love her, but she said it meant *she* didn't love *you* at any rate."

"As you say," said Vernon, "it's ancient history. But you said something about another man."

"Oh, yes—your friend Temple. Say 'damn' again if it's the slightest comfort to you—I've heard worse words."

"When?" asked Vernon, and he sipped his vermouth; "not straight away?"

"Bless me, no! Months and months. We took her home, her father and I. He and she are tremendous chums now."

"Well?"

"You don't want me to tell you the sweet, secret tale of their betrothal? He just came down—at Christmas it was. She was decorating the church. Her father had a transient gleam of common-sense and sent him

TOWN & COUNTRY
Clothes Cabinet

"We decorate it daintily in any style you desire."

Size of cabinet { 84 in. high / 30 in. wide / 23 in. deep

Every now and then something is invented that completely fills a common need that nothing else ever filled before.

The Town and Country Clothes Cabinet is one of them.

It's as good as a built-in closet, and **you can take it anywhere.**

You Must Have One

wherever you lack closet room—in your country house, summer hotel or cottage, in your town apartment or in your extra guest room.

Without tools, not even a hammer, a woman can take it to pieces in two minutes and put it together in five minutes. As simple as building with a child's blocks.

When going to the country, or returning to town, just take it along with your trunks.

"Hangs Princess and Empire gowns beautifully."

"As easy to take out middle or rear garment as the front one."

"Only ten pieces and the rack. Each piece plainly marked."

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Town & Country
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is dainty and durable and contains the famous Pivotal Rack fitted with hangers for every type of garment.

It will hold a dozen gowns, Princess, Empire, or any style, or a dozen men's suits, or half a dozen of each, protecting them from dust, wrinkling or creasing.

(We make the only hangers for Princess and Empire gowns in the world.)

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We will decorate it to your taste or to match any room. You have your choice of many wood finishes and of any cretonne or denim. Price **$20** complete with hangers and shipping case.

The possibilities of these cabinets will be made plain to you at any of our stores and you incur no obligation.

We promptly honor requests for catalogues, illustrated in color, showing cabinets, cretonnes and wood finishes.

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State if you want the Town and Country Clothes Cabinet for women's gowns, men's suits, or both, and we will select proper hangers. On receipt of draft or express money order we will ship the cabinet f. o. b. New York or Chicago. If the Cabinet is not absolutely satisfactory return it and we will refund the price.

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hats have noticeable elegance of style and superb quality. The best hatters sell them. Knapp-Felt, DeLuxe Quality, is $6. Knapp-Felt $4.

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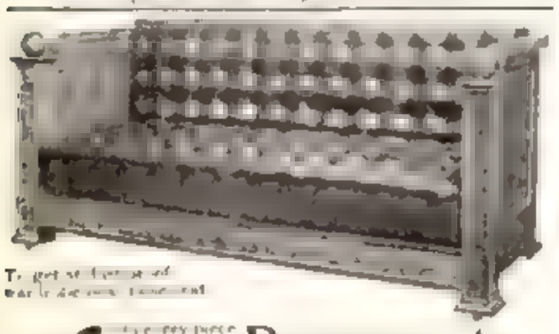

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down to her. 'Is it you?' 'Is it you?' All was over! They returned to that rectory an engaged couple. They were made for each other. Same tastes, same sentiments. They love the same things—gardens, scenery, the simple life, lofty ideals, cathedrals, and Walt Whitman."

"And when are they to be married?"

"They are married. 'What are we waiting for, you and I?' No, I don't know which of them said it. They were married at Easter Sunday-school children throwing cowslips—quite idyllic. All the old ladies from the Mothers' Mutual Twaddle Club came and shed fat tears. They presented a tea-set: maroon with blue roses—most 'igh-class and select."

"Easter?" said Vernon, refusing interest to the maroon and blue teacups. "She must indeed have been fond of me."

"Not she! She wanted to be in love. We all do, you know. But you were the first. But she'd never have suited you. I've never known but two women who would."

"Two?" he said. "Which?"

"Myself for one, saving your presence." She laughed and finished her coffee. "If I'd happened to meet you when I was young—and not bad-looking! It's only my age that keeps you from falling in love with me. The other one's the queen of your suit, poor lady, that you sent the haystack of sunflowers to. Well—good-by. Come and see me when you're in town—Ninety-seven, Curzon Street; don't forget."

When Vernon had finished his vermouth he strolled along to the street where last year Lady St. Craye had had a flat.

Yes—Madame retained still the apartment. Monsieur would find Madame alone.

Monsieur found Madame alone—and reading. She laid the book face downward on the table and held out the hand he had always loved—slender, and loosely made, that one felt one could so easily crush in one's own.

"How time flies!" she said. "How are you? You look very tired."

"I am tired," he said. "I have been in Spain, and in Italy, and in Algiers."

"Very fatiguing countries, I understand. And what is your best news?"

"Betty Desmond's married," he said.

"Yes," she answered; "to that nice boy Temple, too. I saw it in the paper. Dreadful, isn't it? Here to-day and gone to-morrow!"

"I'll tell you why she married him," said Vernon, letting himself down into a chair, "if you'd like me to. But perhaps the subject has ceased to interest you?"

"Not at all," she answered with extreme politeness. So he told her.

"Yes, I suppose it would be like that. It must have annoyed you very much. It's left marks on your face, Eustace. You look tired to death."

"That sort of thing does leave marks."

"That girl taught you something, Eustace; something that's stuck."

"It is not impossible, I suppose," he said, and then very carelessly, as one leading the talk to lighter things, he added: "I suppose *you* wouldn't care to marry me?"

"Candidly," she answered, calling all her powers of deception to her aid—"Candidly, I don't think I should."

"I knew it," said Vernon, smiling; "my heart told me so."

"She," said Lady St. Craye, "was frightened away from her life's happiness, as they call it, by seeing you rather near to a pink silk model. I suppose you think *I* shouldn't mind such things?"

"You forget," said Vernon demurely; "such things never happen after one is married."

"No," she said; "of course they don't. I forgot that."

"You might as well marry me," he said, and the look of youth had come back suddenly, as its way was, to his face.

"I might very much better not."

They looked at each other steadily. She saw in his eyes a little of what it was that Betty had taught him.

She never knew what he saw in hers, for all in a moment he was kneeling beside her, his arm across the back of her chair; his head was on her shoulder, and his face was laid against her neck, as the face of a child, tired with a long play-day, is laid against the neck of its mother.

"Ah, be nice to me!" he said. "I am very tired."

Her arm went round his shoulders as the mother's arm goes round the shoulders of the child.

(THE END)

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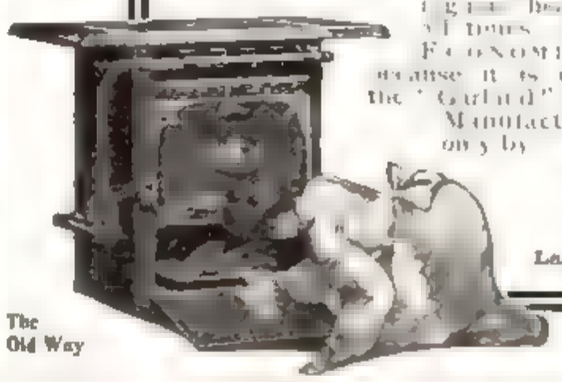

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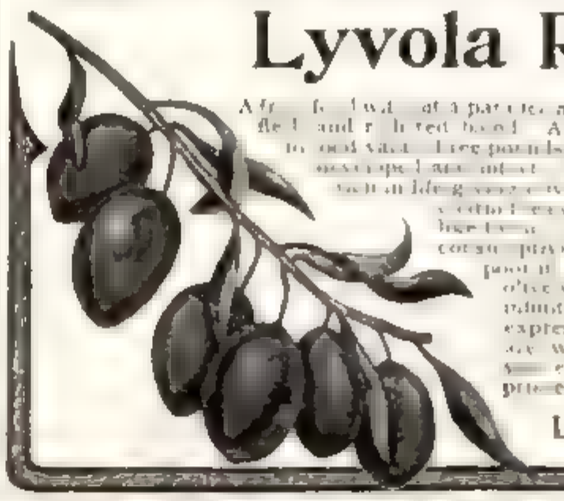

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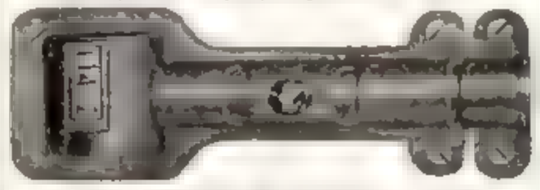

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Plan to spend your vacation on

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¶ Now is the time for you to plan how you will spend your Summer vacation. Don't wait until you are ready to go, but have your plans all made in advance. You could not take any trip that will be more enjoyable, more delightful or more instructive, than one to the glorious Pacific Coast. You will thoroughly enjoy the scenes and incidents of such a tour at the time, and you will live them over again in happy memory for years to come.

¶ You have never realized the magnitude, the commercial possibilities and the great business and social opportunities that exist in this wonderful western country. A tour through this rapidly developing section of the United States will open up to you new possibilities, new aims and new ambitions. Now is the time to make such a trip while you can take advantage of the

Sweeping Reduction in the Cost of Tickets

¶ Just think of starting, say from Chicago, over the Burlington Railroad, up the scenic Mississippi River line, to St. Paul and Minneapolis, the wonder cities of the great Northwest; from there with perhaps a side trip to the Yellowstone Park, the grandest national park in all the world, with its magnificent scenery, wonderful colorings and its mammoth geysers; to the great Puget Sound country—Seattle, Tacoma, Portland—with another side trip up the beautiful and picturesque Columbia River; then south through the noted Shasta region to San Francisco, and from there through the grand Old Mission country to Los Angeles, the garden spot of America; from Los Angeles to Salt Lake City, the home of the Mormons; from there through the magnificent scenic gorges of Colorado's Mountains to Denver; and from Denver back to Chicago over the Burlington Route; or from Los Angeles through the Southern territory, with a side trip to the Grand Canon, and back to Denver and Chicago.

The cost of this Grand Tour, for a round trip ticket from Chicago, is only $88.50; from St. Louis only $82.50; exclusive of side trips; other points proportionately low.

¶ This is only one of several equally delightful Pacific Coast Tours that can be made for as little as $62.50, or $75.00, every one of which will stand out in memory as the trip of a lifetime.

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Our cigars are made of imported Havana tobacco, both wrapper and filler.

Buying at the factory is a pretty clever idea, provided the factory prices are not held up to protect the dealer.

You can buy cigars of us at 5½c. that would cost you 6c after the jobber and retailer had taken toll, and you get them fresh.

Don't send any money now! Just write and tell us what size and shape you like best, and we will send you the cigars and prepay the express charges.

Smoke ten of the cigars and then within ten days simply remit the price, $5.50, or return the remaining ninety cigars at our expense.

Whatever happens, you risk nothing. Either you smoke ten cigars at our expense, or else you get good cigars at "poor-cigar prices."

We are not a mere mail order house. We are cigar experts. If you question our responsibility look us up in Dun's or Bradstreet.

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Department "C," Tampa, Florida

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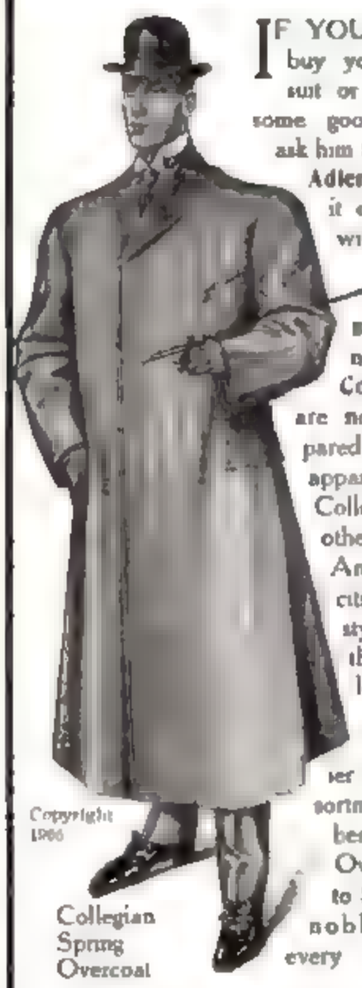
Adler's Collegian Clothes



Collegian Spring Overcoat

IF YOU'RE ready to buy your new Spring suit or overcoat go to some good clothier and ask him to let you see an **Adler Collegian.** Try it on. Examine it with critical care. If you know **quality** and **style** you'll buy no other make. **Collegian Clothes** are not to be compared with any other apparel in this country. College men and all other good dressers in America's largest cities and leading style centers wear these typical college clothes season after season. See your clothier today—the assortment is now at its best. Suits and Overcoats, $12.00 to $30.00—all the nobby fabrics—every proper fashion.

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The R. S. Cigar Cutter

Sent postpaid to any address on receipt of **One Dollar.**

F. H. Dickson, 21A Maiden Lane, N.Y.

"I—I had rather not if you are going to keep me covered with your pistol."

"Of course I shall keep you covered. Unpack your booty at once!"

"My—*what?*"

"Booty."

"Madam, do you take *me* for a thief? Have you, by chance, entered the wrong house? I—I cannot reconcile your voice with what I am forced to consider you—a housebreaker——"

"We will discuss that later. Unpack that bag!" she insisted.

"But—but there is nothing in it except samples of marble ——"

"What!" she exclaimed nervously. "*What* did you say? Samples of *marble?*"

"Marble, madam! Georgia marble!"

"Oh! So *you* are the young man who goes about pretending to peddle Georgia marble from samples! Are you? The famous marble-man I have heard of."

"I? Madam, I don't know what you mean!"

"Come!" she said scornfully; "let me see the contents of that suit-case. I—I am not afraid of you; I am not a bit afraid of you. And I shall catch your accomplice, too."

"Madam! You speak like an honest woman! You *must* have managed to enter the wrong house. This is number thirty-eight, where I live."

"It is number thirty-six; my house!"

"But I *know* it is number thirty-eight; Mr. Lee's house," he protested hopefully. "This is some dreadful mistake."

"Mr. Lee's house is next door," she said. "Do you not suppose I know my own house? Besides, I have been warned against a plausible young man who pretends he has Georgia marble to sell——"

"There is a dreadful mistake somewhere," he insisted. "Please p-p-put up your p-pistol and aid me to solve it. I am no robber, madam. I thought at first that you were. I'm living in Mr. Lee's house, No. 38 East Eighty-third Street, and I've looked carefully at the number over the door of this house and the number is thirty-eight, and the street is East Eighty-third. So I naturally conclude that I am in Mr. Lee's house."

"Your arguments and your conclusions are very plausible," she said, "but, fortunately for me, I have been expressly warned against a young man of your description. *You* are the marble-man!"

"It's a mistake! A very dreadful one."

"Then how did you enter this house?"

"I have a key—I mean I found the front door unlatched. Please, don't misunderstand me; I know it sounds unconvincing, but I really have a key to thirty-eight."

He attempted to reach for his pocket and the pistol glittered in his face.

"Won't you let me prove my innocence?" he asked.

"You can't prove it by showing me a key. Besides, it's probably a weapon. Anyhow, if, as you pretend, you have managed to get into the wrong house, why did you bring that suit-case up here?"

"It was here. It's mine. I left it here in this passageway."

"In *my* house?" she asked incredulously.

"In number thirty-eight; that is all I know. I'll open the suit-case if you will let me. I have already described its contents. If it has samples of marble in it you *must* be convinced!"

"It will convince me that it is your valise. But what of that? I know it is yours already," she said defiantly. "I know, at least, that you are the marble-man—if nothing worse!"

"But malefactors don't go about carrying samples of Georgia marble," he protested, dropping on one knee under the muzzle of her revolver and tugging at the straps and buckles. In a second or two he threw open the case—and the sight of the contents staggered him. For there, thrown in pell-mell among small square blocks of polished marble was a complete kit of burglar's tools, including also a mask, a dark lantern and a black-jack.

"What-w-w-what on earth is this?" he stammered. "These things don't belong to me. I won't have them! I don't want them. Who put them into my suit-case? How the deuce——"

"You *are* the marble-man!" she said with a shudder. "Your crimes are known! Your wretched accomplice will be caught! You are the marble-man—or something worse!"

Kneeling there, aghast, bewildered, he passed his hand across his eyes as though to

To make Cheap Gas-light for Country Homes

TAKE a common Clay Pipe.

Put a simple "Acetylene" Gas-burner on its stem.

Bind the two in position with a tight-fitting piece of Rubber Hose.

Then fill the bowl of the pipe with fine-ground Calcium Carbide.

Next tie a rag over head of the bowl to keep in the Carbide.

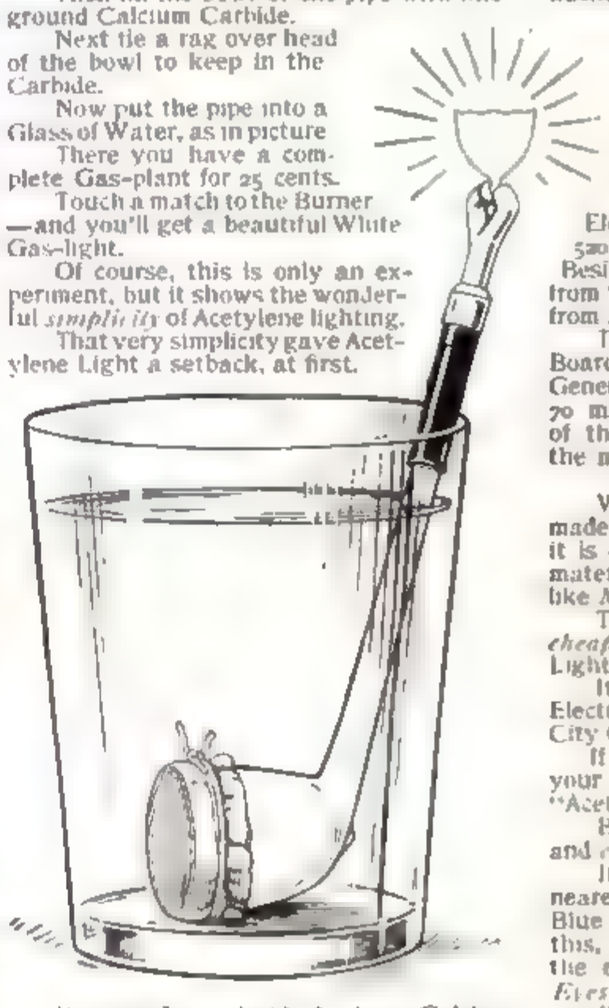
Now put the pipe into a Glass of Water, as in picture

There you have a complete Gas-plant for 25 cents.

Touch a match to the Burner—and you'll get a beautiful White Gas-light.

Of course, this is only an experiment, but it shows the wonderful *simplicity* of Acetylene lighting.

That very simplicity gave Acetylene Light a setback, at first.



It seemed so *simple* to turn Calcium Carbide into Gas-light that over 600 different kinds of "tanks" and "Acetylene Machines" were invented, patented, and marketed for the purpose, by about as many different people.

Well, the thing to be expected certainly happened!

About 530 of these "Acetylene Machines" had been invented and sold by people who knew more about *Tinware* than they did about *Gas-making.*

The "Calcium Carbide" was all right *all* the time, but 530 of the machines for turning it into Gas were all wrong *all* the time.

So Acetylene Gas "got a bad name," though it is clear enough *now* that it never *deserved* it at any time.

It was like selling *Wood Stoves* to burn Hard Coal in, and then blaming the *Coal* for not burning.

* * *

Lots of things happened to grieve the Owners of these 530 makes of alleged "Acetylene Machines."

But very few *accidents* occurred from them even in the days of rank experiment and dense ignorance, among "Generator" Makers.

Of course a gun will go off unexpectedly, now and then, if the trigger be pulled by a person who "didn't know it was loaded."

But that's no fault of the Ammumition—is it?

Well, finaly the Insurance Companies got after these 530 odd makes of "Acetylene Machines" that wouldn't Acetylate, and the Insurance Board made an investigation of all Generators that were submitted to them.

Then out of the 600 odd "Machines" patented, only about 70 were "permitted" by the Insurance Board to be used.

Oh, what a howl was there!

By "permitted" I mean that the Insurance Board was willing that any building should be Insured, without extra charge, which used any one of these 70 Acetylene Generators it had found safe, and effective, just as it permitted houses to be piped for City Gas, or wired for Electricity, under proper conditions.

Now, the Insurance Companies *ought* to know whether or not these 70 different makes of Acetylene Generators were absolutely Safe to use.

Because, *they* have to pay the bills, if Fire or Explosion occurs, from any one of the Acetylene Generators they authorize.

And, here's a proof of their good judgment.

Though there are now Two Million people using Acetylene Light in America, there have only been *four* Fires from it in one year, against 8865 Fires from Kerosene and Gasoline.

There have also been 4691 Fires from Electricity, 1707 Fires from City Gas, and 520 Fires from Candles.

Besides these there have been 26 Fires from the Sun's rays, But,—only *four* Fires from Acetylene.

That shows how *careful* the Insurance Board was in its examination of Acetylene Generators, and in "permitting" only the 70 makes that were *above suspicion*, out of the 600 experiments that were once on the market.

* * *

Well,—the boom in Acetylene Lighting made *lower prices* possible on the material it is derived from, viz., Calcium Carbide, a material that looks like Granite but acts like Magic

Today, Acetylene Light is a full *third cheaper* than Kerosene Light, or Gasoline Light, per Candle Power.

It is not more than *half* the price of Electric Light, nor *three-fourths* that of City Gas

If I can't *prove* these statements to your full satisfaction my name is not "Acetylene Jones."

But Acetylene is *more* than the *safest* and *cheapest* Light of the year 1000.

It is also the *Whitest* Light—the nearest to natural Sunlight in health-giving Blue and Violet rays, and because of this, with its freedom from flicker, it is the easiest of all Artificial Light on the *Eyes.*

It is so much like *real* Sunlight that it has made plants grow 24 hours per day in dark cellars where no ray of Sunlight could reach them. It made them grow *twice as fast* as similar plants that had only the Sunlight of day-time, viz., half the time

That was proven by Cornell University in a three months' experiment made last year.

* * *

Now, I've saved up for the last a point more important to you than all the others about Acetylene Light

It consumes only *one-fourth* as much of the vital *Oxygen* from the Air of Living rooms or bed-rooms, as either Kerosene or City Gas-Light consumes.

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clear them from some terrible vision. But the suit-case was still there with its incriminating contents when he looked again.

"I am sorry for you," she said tremulously. "I—if it were not for the marble—I would let you go. But you are the marble-man!"

"Yes, and I'm probably a madman, too. I don't know what I am! I don't know what is happening to me. I ought to be going, that is all I know——"

"I cannot let you go."

"But I must! I've got to catch a train."

The feebleness of his excuse chilled her pity.

"I shall not let you go," she said, resting the hand which held the pistol on her hip, but keeping him covered. "I know you came to rob my house; I know you are a thoroughly depraved young man, but for all that I could find it in my heart to let you go if you were not also the *marble-man!*"

"What on earth is the marble-man?" he asked, exasperated.

"I don't know. I have been earnestly warned against him. Probably he is a relative of my butler——"

"I'm not a relative of anybody's butler!"

"You *say* you are not. How do I know? I—I will make you an offer. I will give you one last chance. If you will return to me the jewels that my butler took——"

"Good Heavens, madam! Do you really take me for a professional burglar?"

"How can I help it?" she said indignantly. "Look at your suit-case full of lanterns and masks!—full of *marble*, too!"

Speechless, he stared at the burglar's kit.

"I am sorry——" Her voice had altered again to a tremulous sweetness; "I can't help feeling sorry for you. You do not seem to be hardened; your voice and manner are not characteristically criminal. I—I can't see your face very clearly, but it does not seem to be a brutally inhuman face——"

An awful desire to laugh seized Kerns; he struggled against it; hysteria lay that way; and he covered his face with both hands and pinched himself.

She probably mistook the action for the emotion of shame and despair born of bitter grief; perhaps of terror of the law. It frightened her a little, but pity dominated. She could scarcely endure to do what she must do.

"This is dreadful, dreadful!" she faltered. "If you only would give me back my jewels——"

Sounds, hastily smothered, escaped him. She believed them to be groans, and it made her slightly faint.

"I—I've simply got to telephone for the police," she said pityingly. "I must ask you to sit down there and wait!—there is a chair. Sit there—and please don't move, for I—this has unnerved me—I am not accustomed to doing cruel things; and if you should move too quickly or attempt to run away I feel certain that this pistol would explode."

"Are you going to telephone?" he asked.

"Yes, I am."

She backed away cautiously, pistol menacing him, reached for the receiver, and waited for Central. She waited a long time before she realized that the telephone as well as the electric light was out of commission.

"Did *you* cut all these wires?" she demanded angrily.

"I? What wires?"

She reached out and pressed the electric button which should have rung a bell in her maid's bedroom on the top floor. She kept her finger on the button for ten minutes. It was useless.

"You laid deliberate plans to rob this house," she said, her cheeks pink with indignation. "I am not a bit sorry for you. I shall *not* let you go! I shall sit here until somebody comes to my assistance if I have to sit here for weeks and weeks!"

"If you'd let me telephone to my club—" he began.

"Your club! You are very plausible. You didn't offer to call up any club until you found that the telephone was not working!"

He thought a moment: "I don't suppose you would trust me to go out and get a policeman?"

"Certainly not."

"Or go into the front room and open a window and summon some passer-by?"

"How do I know you haven't confederates waiting outside?"

"That's true," he said seriously.

There was a silence. Her nerves seemed to trouble her, for she began to pace to and

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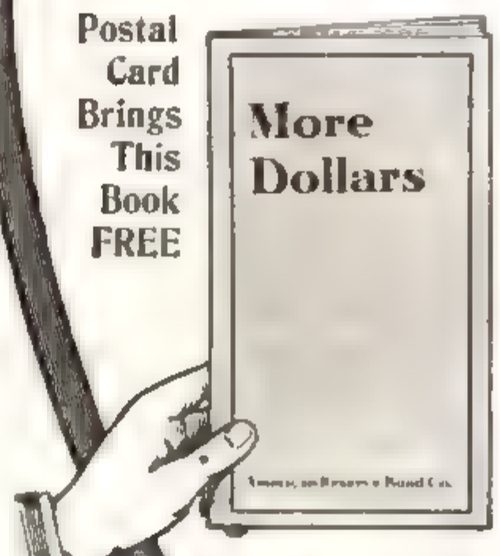

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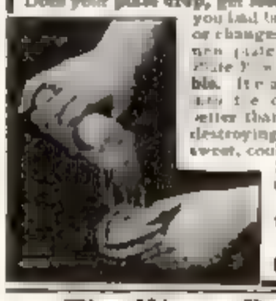

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fro in front of the passageway where he sat comfortably on his chair, arms folded, one knee dropped over the other.

The light being behind her he could not as yet distinguish her features very clearly. Her figure was youthful, slender yet beautifully rounded; her head charmingly in contour. He watched her restlessly walking the floor, small hand clutching the pistol resting on her hip.

The ruddy burnished glimmer on the edges of her hair he supposed, at first, was caused by the strong light behind her.

"This is atrocious!" she murmured, halting to confront him. "How dared you sever every electric connection in my house?"

As she spoke she stepped backward a pace or two, resting herself for a moment against the footboard of the bed—full in the gaslight. And he saw her face.

For a moment he studied her; an immense wave of incredulity swept over him—of wild unbelief, slowly changing to the astonishment of dawning conviction. Astounded, silent, he stared at her from his shadowy corner; and after a while his pulses began to throb and throb and hammer, and the clamoring confusion of his senses seemed to deafen him.

She rested a moment or two against the footboard of the bed, her big gray eyes fixed on his vague and shadowy form.

"This won't do," she said.

"No," he said, "it won't do."

He spoke very quietly, very gently. She detected the alteration in his voice and started slightly, as though the distant echo of a familiar voice had sounded.

"What did you say?" she asked, coming nearer, pistol glittering in advance.

"I said: 'It won't do.' I don't know what I meant by it. If I meant anything I was wrong. It *will* do. The situation is perfectly agreeable to me."

"Insolence will not help you," she said sharply. And, under the sharpness, he detected the slightest quaver of a new alarm.

"I am going to free myself," he said coolly.

"If you move I shall certainly shoot!" she retorted.

"I am going to move—but only my lips. I have only to move my lips to free myself."

"I should scarcely advise you to trust to your eloquence. I have been duly warned, you see."

"Who warned you?" he asked curiously. And, as she disdained to reply: "Never mind. We can clear that up later. Now let me ask you something."

"You are scarcely in a position to ask questions," she said.

"May I not speak to you?"

"Is it necessary?"

He thought a moment: "No, not necessary. Nothing is in this life, you know. I thought differently once. Once—when I was younger—six years younger—I thought happiness was necessary. I found that a man might live without it."

She stood gazing at him through the shadows, pistol on hip.

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"I mean that happiness is not necessary to life. Life goes on all the same. My life has continued for six years without that happiness some believe to be essential."

After a silence she said: "I can tell by the way you speak that you are well born. I—I dread to do what I simply must do."

He, too, sat silent a long time—long enough for an utterly perverse and whimsical humor to take complete possession of him.

"*Won't* you let me go—*this* time?" he pleaded.

"I cannot."

"You had better let me go while you can," he said; "because, perhaps, you may find it difficult to get rid of me later."

Affronted, she shrank back from the doorway and stood in the centre of her room, angry, disdainful, beautiful, under the ruddy glory of her lustrous hair.

His perverse mood changed, too; he leaned forward, studying her minutely—the splendid gray eyes, the delicate mouth and nose, the full, sweet lips, the witchery of wrist and hand, and the flowing, rounded outline of limb and body under the pretty gown. Could this be *she?*—this lovely, mature woman, wearing scarcely a trace of the young girl he had never forgotten—scarcely a trace save in the beauty of her eyes and hair—save in the full, red mouth, sweet and sensitive?

"Once," he said, and his voice sounded to him like voices heard in dreams—"Once,

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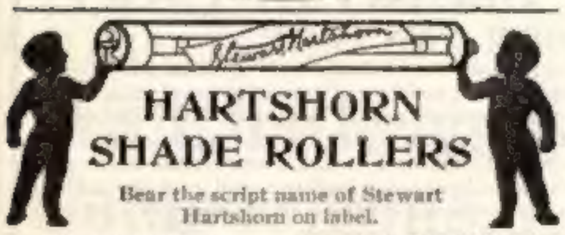

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years and years ago, there was a steamer, and a man and a young girl on board. Do you mind my telling you about it?"

She stood leaning against the footboard of the bed, not even deigning to raise her eyes in reply. So he made the slightest stir in his chair; and then she looked up quickly enough, pistol poised.

"The steamer," said Kerns slowly, "was coming in to Southampton—six years ago. On deck these two people stood—a man of twenty-eight, a girl of eighteen—six years ago. The name of the steamer was the Carnatic. Did you ever hear of that ship?"

She was looking at him attentively. He waited for her reply; she made none; and he went on:

"The man had asked the girl something—I don't know what!—I don't know why her gray eyes filled with tears. Perhaps it was because she could not do what the man asked her to do. It may have been to love him; it may have been that he was asking her to marry him and that she couldn't. Perhaps that is why there were tears in her eyes—because she may have been sorry to cause him the pain of refusal—sorry, perhaps—perhaps a little guilty. Because she must have seen that he was falling in love with her, and she—she let him—knowing that she was to marry another man. Did you ever hear of that man before?"

She had straightened up, quivering, wide-eyed, lips parted. He rose and walked slowly into her room, confronting her under the full glare of light.

Her pistol fell clattering to the floor. It did not explode because it was not loaded.

"Now," he said unsteadily, "will you give me my freedom? I have waited for it—not minutes—but years—six years. I ask it now—the freedom I enjoyed before I ever saw you. Can you give it back to me? Can you restore to me a capacity for happiness? Can you give me a heart to love with—love some woman, as other men love? Is it very much I ask of you—to give me a chance in life—the chance I had before I ever saw you?"

Her big gray eyes seemed fascinated; he looked deep into them, smiling; and she turned white.

"Will you give me what I ask?" he said, still smiling.

She strove to speak; she could not, but her eyes never faltered. Suddenly the color flooded her neck and cheeks to the hair and the quick tears glimmered.

"I—I did not understand; I was too young to be cruel," she faltered. "How could I know what I was doing? Or what—what you did?"

"I? To *you?*"

"Y-yes. Did you think that I escaped heart-free? Do you realize what *my* punishment was?—to—to marry—and *remember!* If I was too young, too inexperienced, to know what I was doing, I was not too young to suffer for it!"

"You mean——" He strove to control his voice, but the sweet, fearless gray eyes met his; the old flame leaped in his veins. He reached out to steady himself and his hand touched hers—that soft, white hand that had held him all these years in the hollow of its palm.

"Did you *ever* love me?" he demanded.

Her eyes, wet with tears, met his straight as the starry gaze of a child.

"Yes," she said.

His hand tightened over hers; she swayed a moment, quivering from head to foot; then, drawing a quick, sobbing breath, closed her eyes, imprisoned in his arms. And, after a long while, aroused, she looked up at him, her divine eyes unclosing dreamily.

"Somebody is hammering at the front door," he breathed. "Listen!"

"I hear. I believe it must be the Tracer of Lost Persons."

"What?"

"Only a Mr. Keen."

"Oh!" said Kerns faintly, and covered his face with her fragrant hands.

Very tenderly, very gravely, she drew her hands away, and, laying them on his shoulders, looked up at him.

"You—you know what there is in your suit-case," she faltered. "Are you a burglar, dear?"

"Ask the Tracer of Lost Persons," said Kerns gently, "what sort of a criminal I am!"

They stood together for one blissful moment listening to the loud knocking below, then, hand in hand, they descended the dark stairway to admit the Tracer of Lost Persons.

(THE END)

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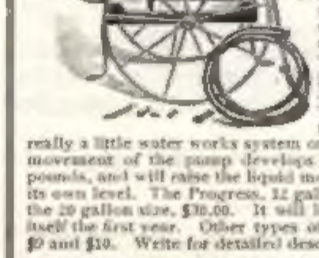

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